



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This is a repository copy of *Rationality and Politics in Roads Decision Making*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/2276/>

Monograph:

Sanderson, Ian (1989) *Rationality and Politics in Roads Decision Making*. Working Paper. Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK.

Working Paper 280

Reuse

Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>



White Rose Research Online

<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

ITS

[Institute of Transport Studies](#)

University of Leeds

This is an ITS Working Paper produced and published by the University of Leeds. ITS Working Papers are intended to provide information and encourage discussion on a topic in advance of formal publication. They represent only the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views or approval of the sponsors.

White Rose Repository URL for this paper:

<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/2276/>

Published paper

Sanderson, I. (1989) *Rationality and Politics in Roads Decision Making*. Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds. Working Paper 280

Working Paper 280
July 1989

RATIONALITY AND POLITICS
IN
ROADS DECISION MAKING

Ian Sanderson

ITS Working Papers are intended to provide information and encourage discussion on a topic in advance of formal publication. They represent only the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or approval of sponsors.

This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Decision Making in Theory
3. The Institutional Framework
4. Ideology, Professionalism and Power
5. Decision Making for National Roads
 - 5.1 Government Objectives and Decision Making
 - 5.2 National Roads Policies and Programmes
 - 5.3 The Planning of Specific Schemes
 - 5.4 Framework Appraisal in Scheme Planning
6. Decision Making for Local Roads
 - 6.1 Central Government Control over Local Decision Making
 - 6.2 The Growth of Central Control
 - 6.3 The TSG System and the Extension of Central Control
 - 6.4 The Influence of Scheme Appraisal Techniques
 - 6.5 The Scope and Influence of Local Autonomy
7. Conclusion - On the Scope for 'Rational' Decision Making

Notes

References

1. Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing concern with the performance of public sector institutions. Such concern is reflected, for example, in the work of the Audit Commission and National Audit Office which is directed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of local and national government institutions in the context of a broader programme to reduce the scale of resources to be allocated through public sector decision making. This concern with effective decision making has intensified debate about the potential role of the application of science in improved decision-aiding techniques. This debate has a long history, but has gained a renewed currency with the development and refinement of the power of information technology (IT) with its enhanced capacity to permit the application of analysis in support of decision making.

However, there exists a considerable degree of controversy about the role of scientific knowledge, analytical techniques and IT methods, and of the experts who apply them, in 'improving' decision making. The 'rationalist' extreme was perhaps epitomised by Yehezkel Dror's advocacy of 'policy sciences' in his concern with "...the contribution of systematic knowledge, structured rationality and organized creativity to better policy making..." in which "...policy sciences is essential for improvement of the human condition..."¹ Opponents of this view emphasise the role of value-conditioned judgement and of political processes in particular social and institutional contexts; we can recall Sir Geoffrey Vickers' insight to the effect that "...even the simplest of the policy maker's problems is not to be resolved by even the most complicated of his calculations..."²

Our research is located in this controversial area and is concerned with the scope for 'improving' decision making about major roads investment projects through the use of computerised decision support systems (DSS) based upon the framework approach to scheme appraisal. Following the work of the Leitch Committee and SACTRA the framework approach is now well-established as the means for the application of the cost-benefit form of evaluation to major road schemes.³ However, in combining and comparing a wide range of impacts, only some of which are readily quantifiable, the framework requires judgement to be exercised in determining relative weights and trade-offs between impacts and affected groups. Our research aims to examine the potential role of a decision support system in helping to clarify the basis upon which such judgement is exercised.

Our basic starting point in this research is the view that the form and application of analytical decision-aiding methods and techniques must be tailored to the broader decision-making process within which they are to be applied.⁴ Consequently, there is a need to ensure that the development of such techniques takes place in the context of an understanding of decision-making practice in the transport field, in particular its political and

institutional dimensions. In O'Riordan and Sewell's terms what is important is the 'political culture' or "...the modes of conventions, laws, institutional guides and accustomed ways of doing things in the policy-making process, namely the mechanisms through which articulated interests are translated into authoritative action favouring, to various degrees, such interests..."⁵

The aim of this paper is to attempt to provide a contextual understanding of the 'realities' of decision-making practice in relation to roads decision making practice. However, perceived 'realities' are contingent upon a theoretical framework for analysis and there is considerable theoretical dispute about the nature of the state and state action which has implications for the study of public sector decision making. In what follows, therefore, we provide our analysis of practice with a theoretical basis. In Section 2 we examine briefly the dispute between 'rationalist' and 'incrementalist' theories of decision making and develop an alternative perspective. Section 3 considers the institutional context of transport decision making, outlining a theoretical framework for analysis of the influence of various interests on transport decision making. This framework is elaborated further in Section 4 in terms of the influence on decision making of dominant ideological themes, of analysis and professionalism, and of the forms of exercise of political power. We then go on to discuss some aspects of the practice of roads decision making in terms of these influences. Section 5 discusses national roads, planned and built by central government, while Section 6 discusses local authority roads. In Section 7 we draw together conclusions on the nature of the roads decision making process and on the potential role of technical decision aids in this process.

2. Decision Making in Theory

Decisions concerning the provision of transport infrastructure are, primarily, the responsibility of state institutions at national or local level. Traditionally, it has been widely accepted that provision through the market mechanism would not result in a socially efficient outcome due to problems relating, for example, to externalities, market structure and indivisibility.⁶ Therefore, decisions concerning the improvement of transport facilities are not made solely on the basis of consumers' demand. Rather, the central concept becomes that of 'need' as assessed by third parties involved in the decision-making process in state institutions, whether appointed officials (professionals or 'experts') or elected representatives (politicians). However, this view of the role of the state has come under increasing challenge in recent years from 'New Right' theorists whose ideas have found expression in the Thatcher Government's programme of privatisation and deregulation.⁷ The implication of the Governments present policies is that market interactions within a framework of minimal regulation will increasingly replace need as assessed by state institutions as the basis for decision making about the provision of transport facilities and services.

The balance between the role of 'the state' and 'the market' will always be a controversial issue underlain by conflicting value-based theoretical commitments. At the present time, however, public sector institutions still play a predominant role in the transport sector. Within such institutions, transport policies can be seen essentially as guidelines for the allocation of resources to meet defined needs; or to achieve institutional objectives since needs are defined in relation to such objectives. Policies then become central to the effectiveness of state institutions and attention focuses on the process whereby policies are formulated and decisions concerning resource allocation are made.

Theoretical discussion of the policy-making process has been dominated by dispute between, on the one hand, those who advocate the 'rational' model (in which decision making involves the selection of the means which will maximise defined ends, the selection being made on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of alternatives and their consequences), and, on the other hand, those who emphasise the 'incrementalist' nature of decision making as essentially a process of incremental adjustment to perceived problems through bargaining, negotiation and compromise⁸. Two particular aspects of this dispute can be highlighted.

The first issue concerns the 'dual personality' of policy analysis - the schism between, on the one hand, the concern with description and explanation of policy making and, on the other hand, the concern with prescriptive guidance on how to improve policy making. These concerns tend to become confused in the debate. The rational model is usually seen as basically

prescriptive, its advocates arguing that if it was adhered to more widely then government decision making would be more effective⁹. However, it is also widely used as a model of how decisions are made in practice. On the other hand, the incrementalist model has been informed primarily by analysis of policy-making practice, and therefore, is more descriptive/explanatory of the alleged 'realities' of decision making in organisations. However, the main originator of this model, Charles Lindblom, has suggested that policy making should be incremental because "...complex problems cannot be completely analyzed..."¹⁰. The result is an inter-weaving of empirical and evaluative concerns in studies of decision making.

The second issue of interest relates to the nature of the 'rationality' which underpins these theoretical perspectives. The rational model is founded upon procedural and analytical rationality: the more logical procedure and analysis is applied to decision making the more effective will be the process and the outcomes. The incremental model, on the other hand, emphasises a political rationality: effective decisions are arrived at through an essentially political process of bargaining, negotiation and compromise. By implication the rational model places more emphasis on the role of analysis and experts in the decision-making process while in the incremental model the focus is more on the role of elected politicians.

Attempts have been made to derive an accommodation between rationalism and incrementalism the best known being Herbert Simon's 'bounded rationality' or 'satisficing', Dror's 'economically rational model', Etzioni's 'mixed scanning', and Linbolm's move towards 'strategic analysis'.¹¹ These accounts are essentially concerned to combine descriptive realism from incrementalism with some prescriptive idealism from rationalism. They attempt to address the main criticisms which have been directed at each model: viz. unrealism in the tenets of rationalism and its prescriptive implication of the domination of decision making by professionals; and conservatism in incrementalist prescriptions arising through neglect of radical change and emphasis on bargaining and compromise within the existing structure of power.¹²

These developments highlight the artificiality of the rationalist and incrementalist models and suggest a 'contingency theory' position. Within such an approach the focus is on two dimensions of decision making relating to the two views of rationality outlined above: viz. on the one hand, analytical and procedural rationality and, on the other hand, political power and participation. In explaining decision-making practice this approach assesses the relative influence of factors in these two dimensions contingent upon the particular social, political and institutional context. It attempts to derive measures for the effectiveness of decision making and to assess the contribution to effectiveness of the various factors representing 'analytical' and 'political' influences. It derives prescriptions for 'improved' policy making based upon such an analysis, in which possible changes in analytical techniques and procedures and in

forms of accommodation of the interests of affected organisations, groups and individuals will be tailored to the specific institutional and political context of the decision-making process.

Our examination of some aspects of roads decision-making practice is based upon such a theoretical position. In the next section we examine briefly the institutional context to elaborate the framework for a discussion of the main factors influencing decision making.

3. The Institutional Framework

The institutional context of decision making in the transport sector requires analysis at trans-national, national and local level. As regards the first level, membership of the EEC brings with it a range of influences on UK transport policy and decision-making. Transport was identified by the Treaty of Rome as an area for 'common policy' due to its key role in achieving the aim of free movement of products, people, services and capital between member states.¹³ Limited progress has been made in terms of the development of a 'positive' policy framework and the impact on national policy has derived mainly from Commission directives imposing various harmonization regulations to assist the freer working of transport markets (e.g. tariffs, driver-hours, lorry weights and sizes). More recently, directives have been issued relative to the environmental impact of transport (e.g. control of exhaust emissions, and on environmental assessment of major projects). A further important influence on decision-making is the availability of grant assistance from the European Regional Development Fund for infrastructure development in regions of low prosperity to assist economic growth and reduce regional inequalities. The introduction of majority voting in the Council of Ministers and moves towards a single European market after 1992 have strengthened the 'supranational' dimension of decision-making thus generating increasing tension over the reduction of national autonomy in transport policy decisions.¹⁴

Notwithstanding this trend, national government retains a predominant role and influence in transport decision making. In England this is achieved primarily through the Department of Transport (DTp) which is responsible for direct provision only in the case of motorways and trunk roads; its main role is in the formulation of policy for the development of transport facilities and services by nationalised industries, local authorities and private concerns, the control of expenditure by nationalised industries and local authorities, and the regulation of transport operations in terms of both competition and safety.¹⁵ By these means the DTp manages the framework for decisions about transport provision which is intended to achieve governmental aims and objectives. Currently, these emphasise competition, efficiency and support for economic growth, subject to safety and environmental considerations.¹⁶

However, other government departments also play an important role in shaping the institutional framework for transport decision making. The Treasury has significant influence by virtue of its central role in the allocation of resources between spending departments in the annual public expenditure planning process.¹⁷ The Department of the Environment plays a less direct role through its responsibilities for the system of control of local government expenditure, for approval of Statutory Development Plans and for the Urban Programme. Various interests are brought to bear upon transport decision making through these departmental roles. In particular, it is possible to see a tension between, on the one hand, an interest in controlling the fiscal demands

of the state in order to protect the process of capital accumulation (institutionalised in the Treasury) and, on the other hand, an interest in securing additional resources for transport both to support accumulation (cf. promote economic growth) and to maintain the perceived legitimacy of, and broad support for, the state (cf. support public transport, protect the environment). The latter interest can be seen as institutionalised in the DTP with the balance between spending directed at economic (accumulation) and social/ environmental objectives contingent upon the balance of influence of various political and social forces upon the central state as brought to bear through, for example, ideological commitments, professional values, interest representation in the political system and the process of consultation with, and lobbying of, various interest groups.¹⁸

Therefore, the framework of policy, control and regulation sustained by the government can be seen to shape the process of transport decision making in accordance with the prevailing balance of 'institutional interests'. This framework has a major influence on decision-making at the local government level through the TPP/TSG system, through the system of local government financial control, and through legislative provisions relating, for example, to the regulation and subsidising of local public transport services. Through this framework central government is able to achieve a high degree of control over local authorities' transport expenditure and provision which, moreover, has increased significantly over the past decade.¹⁹ Nevertheless, local authorities retain an important degree of relative autonomy and discretion in relation to local transport policy and decisions so there is an important local dimension to the forms of influence of political and social forces through, again, ideology, professional values and political representation. In the next section we elaborate our theoretical framework in terms of the influence of these factors on decision making.

4. Ideology Professionalism and Power

'Ideology' is a controversial term often used simply to denote systems of ideas and beliefs about how the world does work and how the world ought to work. However, an alternative view links ideology with legitimation viz. "...beliefs and values which are justifications for the status quo, the preservation of existing institutions and the interests which they serve..."²⁰ According to this view, therefore, ideology can be linked to interests institutionalised in the state and can be seen as playing an important role in bringing such interests to bear upon the public policy-making process.

Cotgrove (1982) has identified the nature of a dominant ideology in relation to debates on environmental issues which provides a set of core values upon which is constructed a set of beliefs about how society does and should work, from which flow prescriptions for action. The core values emphasise the creation of material wealth through economic growth and from these derive certain beliefs: in individualism; in the market mechanism; in authoritative structures in which elected representatives managers and experts are predominant in decision-making; and in the power of science and technology to promote economic and social progress. An important feature of this dominant ideology is its underlying conception of rationality in human affairs which is related to the belief in the objectivity of science, in the distinction between 'facts' and 'values'; thus, in this 'instrumental' view, only the discussion of alternative means can be rational while the consideration of ends is, by definition, outside the realms of rationality.²¹

Such a dominant ideology can be seen as structuring the 'conventional wisdom' about what constitutes the 'rational' approach to decision making; it provides, in Cotgrove's terms, "...the taken-for-granted common-sensical view..."²² This can be seen in terms of the two dimensions of decision making which we identified in Section 2. As regards the analytical/procedural dimension the conventional wisdom in transport decision making sees 'better' decisions as contingent upon the application of formal techniques of analysis and appraisal within a decision-making process which embodies formal means-ends rationality. This results in a major role for professionals and experts. In terms of the political dimension, the authority of elected representatives in making decisions (informed by the results of professional analysis) is emphasised reflecting the strict facts/value distinction.²³ Such authority derives from the legitimacy of the system of representative democracy and is supported by the existence of procedures for consultation and 'public participation' to obtain the views of the public and various groups on specific issues in accordance with pluralistic assumptions. Therefore, the dominant ideology structures a view of rationality which conditions conventional thought about the effectiveness and legitimacy of the decision-making process.

An important feature, then, of the approach to transport

decision-making which has resulted from such thinking is the important role played by formal techniques of analysis and appraisal and by the professionals who apply them.²⁴ However, the degree of reliance on such techniques has attracted considerable criticism. At a general level there has developed a critique of the 'technocratic' approach to decision making on the grounds that its focus on the relative efficiency of alternative means in relation to given ends suppresses political discussion of alternative values thus reinforcing the 'status quo'.²⁵ More specifically, the widespread application of cost-benefit analysis (CBA) in transport decision making is seen by some as epitomising technocracy or, in Self's terminology, 'econocracy'.²⁶ CBA is seen as placing excessive emphasis upon readily-identified, direct and quantifiable impacts of transport schemes to the neglect of impacts on the broader environment and social context which are often indirect and difficult to measure and quantify, which introduce consideration of a wide range of affected interests and which are subject to controversy based on conflicting value judgements. Therefore, it is argued that CBA attempts to reduce issues which are genuinely social and political to a purely technical level thereby eroding the scope for political debate and criticism. However, this technical facade serves to conceal the actual influence of powerful interests on the decision-making process whether such influence is brought to bear directly through political processes or indirectly through taken-for-granted judgements and perceptions applied in analytical processes.²⁷

From this point of view, therefore, CBA performs an important ideological role by providing an apparently 'rational' basis for transport decision making (enhancing effectiveness and legitimacy) which conceals and protects from challenge the influence of dominant partisan interests. Moves to broaden the cost-benefit framework to accommodate environmental and social impacts, based on the recommendations of the Leitch committee in the late 1970's, are seen as an attempt to accommodate criticism but as not changing fundamentally the basic project "...to make environmental decisions commensurate with the market economy..."²⁸ The Framework is seen as having an extended ideological role by virtue of its incorporation of broader non-economic impacts into a rational assessment calculus which, notwithstanding the emphasis on 'judgement', promotes a focus on quantifiable impacts (such as noise and visual intrusion), and a focus on attempting to quantify what has previously been seen as unquantifiable.²⁹

The influence of the rational decision-making model in transport is mirrored by the role of professionals in the transport planning process. Highway engineers have traditionally had an important role in both local authorities and central government in terms of perceptions of both policy and professional practice.³⁰ Since the 1960's the influence of professional economists has increased with the introduction of more rational methods for planning resource allocation in central government (as epitomised by, for example, the recommendations of the 1961 Plowden Report).³¹ These professions have readily adopted and

promoted techniques for quantitative analysis and assessment of transport systems as the rational basis for more effective decision making.³² Underpinned by an extensive academic research effort into extending the sophistication and scope of such quantitative techniques, the transport experts have a dual influence, firstly by reinforcing a dominant perception of rationality in decision making and, secondly, by applying judgements and professional biases in the decision making process thus promoting particular interests.³³

The importance of this influence is the subject of some dispute. On the one hand, there are those who see, in the advent of technocracy, the dominance of experts over elected politicians in decision making - the reduction of politics to 'rational administration'. On the other hand there are those who see the technocratic model and the emphasis on expertise as a distortion which masks the reality of a decision-making process which is essentially 'political' in nature i.e. a process in which decisions are essentially the outcome of the exercise of power by various social forces through available channels and institutions. However, in analyzing the political dimension of transport decision making there is no consensus on the way in which such power is actually exercised. As indicated above, the dominant ideology stresses the authority of elected representatives who are seen as responding to overt demands or pressures from various groups in a basically pluralist context. This view has been criticized, however, because it neglects two important aspects to the exercise of power.³⁴ The first occurs where there is covert suppression of certain demands or pressures such that they are kept off the political agenda. The second occurs where potential demands or pressures remain latent due to the shaping of peoples' perceptions and preferences so that they accept the status quo. This manipulation of consensus so as to defuse potential challenge to existing dominant values Lukes (1974) calls "...the supreme and most insidious exercise of power..."³⁵

The implications of such an analysis is that there exist systematic biases in the ability of different groups and interests in society to exercise power over decision making, firstly in terms of resources to mobilise overt demands and pressures, secondly in terms of scope for 'inside', covert manipulation of the political agenda, and thirdly in terms of the extent to which interests are served by the ideological shaping of consensus around dominant values. As regards this third 'face of power' we have referred to certain key themes of the dominant ideology - belief in material economic growth, in individualism and in the market mechanism - and it is possible to see these themes at work in the formation of consensus around the desirability of private transport as an expression of free individual choice in the market and as a means to promoting economic growth.³⁶ As regards the first two 'faces of power' there has been considerable criticism of the degree of inequality in the ability of different groups and interests to influence transport policy and decision making and, in particular, of a perceived substantial bias in favour of the 'roads lobby'.³⁷

The roads lobby represents a network of vested interests including the motor industry, road builders and road users. Organisations representing these interests (e.g. the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, the British Aggregate Construction Materials Industries, the Freight Transport Association, the Automobile Association etc.) operate individually and in association (e.g. through the CBI Transport Committee and the British Road Federation) to influence transport policy and decision making. Critics argue that the power and influence of these interests greatly outweighs that of other groups (e.g. those promoting public transport and environmental protection) due to two main factors. First, they have considerable resources to expend on staff, organisation, publicity and, most importantly, lobbying activities. Second, and more significant, they have close relations with government via the Department of Transport which are manifested in consultation and personal links. The roads lobby is an 'insider group' in the policy-making process and is therefore able to exercise effective overt and covert influence in this process.³⁸

From the viewpoint of such an analysis of power, therefore, there exists a predominance of influence over transport decision making in favour of certain powerful interests promoting private transport and road construction. The scope for influence of alternative values and interests is limited in various ways. First, groups and organisations promoting such values and interests have fewer resources and are 'outsiders' in terms of relations with government and Whitehall. Second, such values and interests (relating, for example, to environmental protection and collective transport provision) do not gain direct support from dominant ideological themes. Third, opportunities for direct participation by the public in the decision-making process are circumscribed by certain means. The main factor here is the role of the dominant pluralist ideology which, as indicated earlier, stresses the authority of elected representatives responding to a plurality of overt group pressures and therefore the limited need for direct participation. This, combined with the 'authority of expertise' can be seen as leading to a culture of limited participation which implicitly encourages people to 'leave things to elected politicians and experts'. A related factor is the limiting of participation exercises so that government objectives and policies cannot be challenged on the grounds that these are matters for 'democratic decisions of Parliament'.³⁹ Circumscribed participation is implicitly justified with reference to pluralistic themes of the dominant ideology.

However, if there do exist systematic biases in the power and influence of different groups and interests in the decision making process then the effect of the dominant ideology is to conceal and legitimise such biases behind the distorted facade of pluralistic representative democracy. This can be seen as reinforcing the legitimising role of the rational, technocratic model which, by identifying 'rational' decision making with the application of (preferably quantitative) analytical and appraisal

techniques by professional experts, serves to conceal the actual influence of powerful groups and interests in the decision-making process. In short, from this perspective, the dominant ideology serves to protect from scrutiny and challenge, to legitimise, the position and role of powerful groups and interests in the transport policy-making process.

This analysis highlights the importance of the political dimension of decision-making - the importance of the form of exercise of power by various social forces to influence the allocation of state-controlled resources in accordance with their interests. Power is exercised in a variety of ways: by overt and covert pressure through available institutional channels; by dominant ideological themes which structure what people 'take for granted'; by appeal to the authority of scientific techniques and expertise and of elected representatives. This predominance of political power over analytical rationality is reflected, moreover, in conclusions of studies of policy making in various fields, commonly interpreted as supporting the focus of the incrementalist model on pragmatic political bargaining processes.⁴⁰

However, this is not to argue that the application of analytical and procedural rationality to decision-making is unimportant. There are three aspects to this dimension. First, analytical techniques and procedures applied by professionals and experts can play an important role in increasing the legitimacy of the decision-making process, and of particular decisions, by giving an appearance of rationality that meshes with dominant ideological themes. Second, such techniques and procedures undoubtedly do play a role in informing the basis for choice where the scope for choice does exist within the parameters set by the political process. Third, there remains the fundamental question of the extent to which the effectiveness of the decision-making process could be improved by reforms which gave an enhanced role to 'rational' techniques and procedures.

It is clear that such reforms must be considered in the context of the forms of exercise of political power. Improvements in analytical decision aids must be tailored to 'key into' the political process. Two important questions arise: Do such improvements actually increase the quality of decisions or do they merely serve to enhance the appearance of rationality and hence the legitimacy of the decision-making process? To what extent can such improvements enhance effectiveness in the absence of reforms to the political and institutional context - to the ways in which organisational, group and individual interests are represented in, and brought to bear upon, the decision-making process.

We shall return to such questions in Section 7; meanwhile we shall discuss some aspects of the practice of roads decision making to examine in more specific terms the influence of the various factors discussed in this section, particularly in terms of how they are manifested in decision making in central and local state institutions.

5. Decision Making for National Roads

5.1 Government Objectives and Decision Making

As indicated in Section 3 above the framework for decision making in relation to transport provision is determined and managed primarily at central government level; in England this is achieved mainly through the DTp via policy, control and regulatory measures. In the case of motorways and trunk roads, however, the DTp is responsible directly for new construction and maintenance and, therefore, the framework for decision making in this respect is provided by the Department's stated objectives and policies. Two characteristics of the Government's transport objectives are particularly notable.

First, as regards general transport objectives, an emphasis is placed upon increasing the role of the market in transport provision; thus, heading the list of objectives is that expressing the concern to "...increase consumer choice, and efficiency, by policies to increase competition and to decrease the role of the public sector, including deregulation".⁴¹ Second, objectives for the trunk road programme emphasise its role in assisting economic growth by reducing transport costs.⁴² Other objectives relate to environmental and safety concerns but the primacy of assisting economic growth is clear from justifications of increased expenditure on national roads since the early 1980's. Thus, in the 1987 'Roads White Paper' it is stated that:

"...the funds allocated to the trunk road programme have been substantially increased, largely because of the importance attached to roads in aiding economic growth and increasing the competitiveness of industry through reduced transport costs".⁴³

The 1989 White Paper⁴⁴ announced a £6 billion expansion in the trunk road programme⁴⁴ which, again, was justified primarily in relation to the objective of promoting economic growth:

"We must maintain the economy's progress.... our main efforts to provide additional transport capacity in support of growth and prosperity must be directed towards widening existing roads and building new ones... The expansion of the programme concentrates on the need to keep Britain's goods moving."⁴⁵

Therefore, the Government's objectives for transport provide an evaluative framework for decision making which reflects the dominant ideological themes discussed in Section 4 above - an emphasis upon material growth and progress, upon individual choice, and upon the rationality of the market. This framework conditions the nature of decisions about roads investment via the perception of the 'value' of such investment - via the substantive criteria, and their relative weighting, against which schemes are evaluated. However, also of importance is the

procedural dimension, the form of the process by which decisions are made. In this respect there are two 'levels' of interest: first, the approach to the determination of policies and programmes for national roads and, secondly, the process of decision making in relation to specific schemes.

5.2 National Roads Policies and Programmes

The formulation of policies for the development of the national road network, and the determination of the programme of extensions and improvements to the network, is primarily the responsibility of the DTp. Formally, the responsibility rests with Ministers who are accountable to Parliament. Policies and programmes are set out in the biennial White Paper which provides the opportunity for Parliamentary scrutiny and debate. This model of formal representative democracy, of constitutional principle, embodies the assumption of the authority of elected representatives and their decision-making institutions which relates to the dominant ideological themes discussed in the previous section. It rests fundamentally on the assumption that Parliament provides an effective forum for bringing the 'public interest' to bear upon the formulation of government policy.

We do not have the space here to review the debate around this issue but it is clear that the strength of one-party majority government and the degree of control exercised by the Government over the proceedings of Parliament seriously undermine the ability of Parliament effectively to hold the executive accountable to it.⁴⁶ However, in the absence of effective accountability to the whole range of values and interests represented in Parliament, there exists the potential for particular ideological commitments and interests to dominate the formulation of roads policies and programmes within the executive. The tendency for special interest lobbies to focus their attention and efforts on the executive indicates a recognition of where the balance of power lies.⁴⁷ We referred earlier to the degree of influence exerted by the 'roads lobby' primarily through relations with the DTp which has been the subject of critical study by Hamer (1987).

One means by which Parliament does achieve a degree of scrutiny over Government policy is via Select Committees, which have the power "...to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the (relevant) government departments... and associated public bodies".⁴⁸ The House of Commons Transport Committee 'shadows' the DTp and in undertaking its scrutinies takes evidence both from the DTp and from a range of interested organisations and experts. The Transport Committee undertakes an annual scrutiny of the Government's expenditure plans for transport as set out in the 'Public Expenditure White Paper' which includes consideration of the national roads programme. The range of organisations submitting evidence to the Committee tends to be dominated by local authority associations and the organisations comprising the 'roads lobby'. As regards the consideration of national roads, therefore, the weight of evidence derives from the latter organisations and it is possible to see the

Committee's advocacy of an expansion of trunk road capacity as, at least in part, a reflection of the influence of such organisations.⁴⁹

At the level of the determination of roads policies and programmes it would appear that the decision-making process is dominated more by political than by technical/analytical considerations. In addition to the influence of special interest lobbies two important aspects of the political dimension to the process can be identified. The first concerns the nature of the transport policy framework in which decisions on the scale of the trunk road programme are made independently of considerations relating to other modes. This reflects the ideological and political commitment to market principles and a 'supply-side' orientation to the policy process deriving from the belief in the sanctity of free consumer choice in a competitive market. Within such a framework the notion of integrated planning of transport provision across all modes on the basis of 'need' is ruled out; decisions on the road programme become a matter of responding to consumer choice in the form of actual and forecast traffic levels subject to a particular pricing regime. In this way the broader approach to thinking about the issue of roads provision is conditioned by political and ideological parameters and it can be seen as producing an inherent momentum towards increasing the supply of road capacity due to the perception:

"It would... be wrong - and economically damaging - to deprive people and businesses of choice."⁵⁰

The second important aspect of the political dimension of the decision-making process relates to the allocation of resources to the trunk road programme during the public expenditure planning process. Notwithstanding attempts to render this process more 'rational' through the introduction of Programme Planning and Budgeting Systems (PPBS) and Programme Analysis and Review (PAR), and the establishment of the Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS) during the 1970's (attempts which met with little success) decision making on the allocation of public expenditure has remained a predominantly political process. In the words of Sir Douglas Wass:

"It is, however, when it comes to dividing the agreed total between the different programmes that the concept of rationality begins to come under strain. Decisions in this area are governed by two well-entrenched, if rather arbitrary principles. Number one: 'as things are, so broadly they remain'; and number two: 'he who has the muscle gets the money'".⁵¹

Therefore, although the DTp may support its negotiations with the Treasury with extensive analysis and appraisal "...at the end there is a political judgement to be made which in practice is necessarily determined as much by constraints as by priorities."⁵²

The predominantly political nature of the process of decision

making in relation to national roads policies and programmes renders the latter subject to the dominant influence of the particular values and interests which are promoted by the Government and which are brought to bear by powerful pressure groups upon the institutions involved in the process. In the present context of one-party majority government the ability of Parliament in practice to scrutinise critically these values and interests and to bring alternatives to bear upon policy formulation is extremely limited. However, issues of policy and strategy are excluded from consideration in the process of decision making on specific road schemes precisely on the grounds that these matters have been subject to the 'democratic decision of Parliament'. In this way the Government's policies can be seen as legitimised, further protected from critical scrutiny, with reference to the ideology of the democratic authority of elected representatives and of Parliamentary institutions.

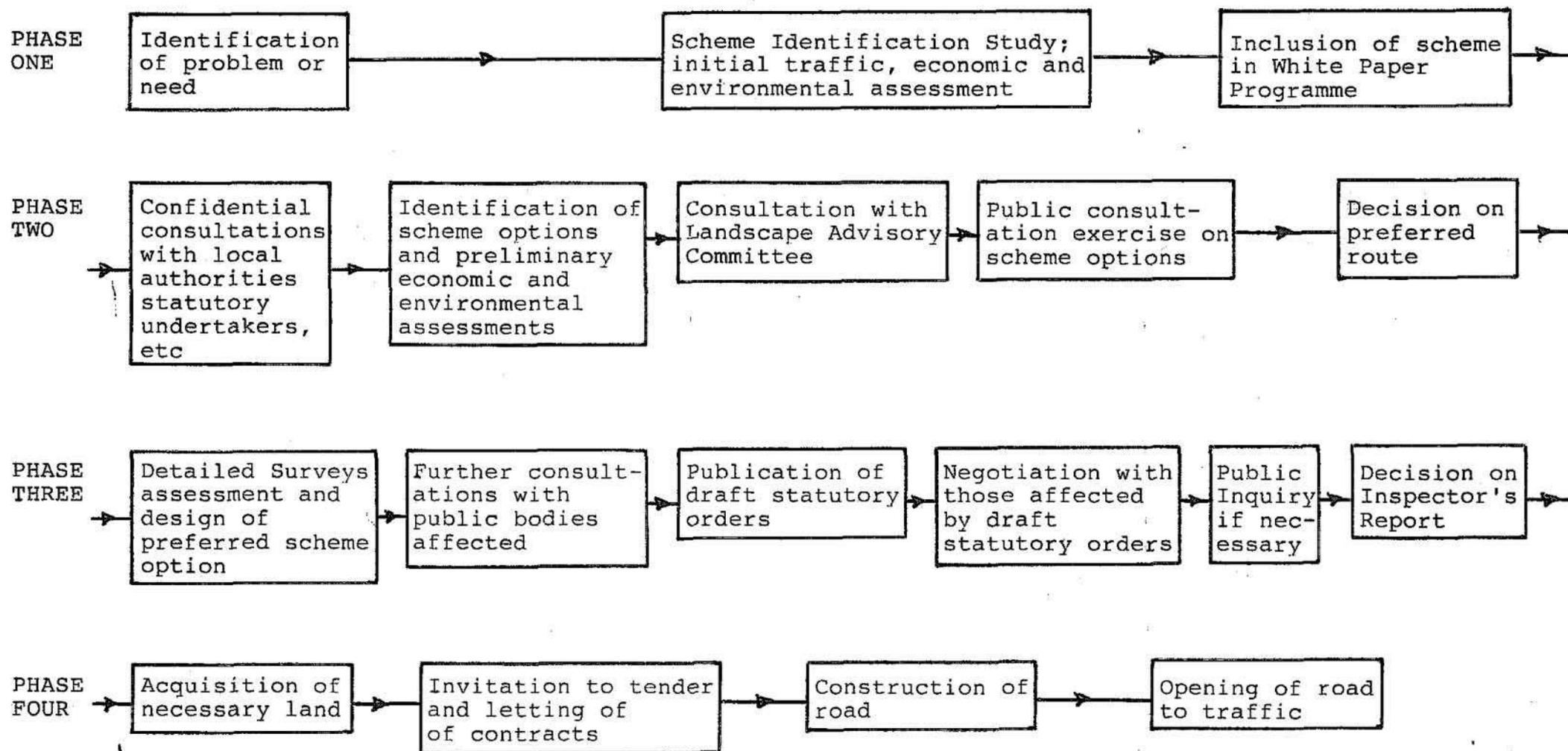
5.3 The Planning of Specific Schemes

Therefore, the process of decision making on specific trunk road schemes is heavily circumscribed by prior decisions which are not open to question when individual schemes are considered. The main stages in the planning process for specific major trunk road schemes are indicated in Figure 1.⁵³ Broadly, the process has four main phases. In the first phase an existing problem and need for a road scheme will be identified and preliminary traffic, economic and environmental assessments undertaken in Scheme Identification Studies to determine whether traffic management measures, road widening or a new route represents the best solution. The Secretary of State makes the decision on whether a major scheme (>£1mill) is needed and, if so, this enters the White Paper Programme.

In the second phase more detailed assessment of the traffic, economic and environmental effects of alternative scheme designs are undertaken, informal confidential discussions are pursued with local authorities and statutory undertakers, and the views of the Landscape Advisory Committee are obtained. A number of scheme options are then presented in a public consultation exercise via a local exhibition. The Secretary of State then makes a decision on a preferred route on the basis of analytical results and the views expressed at public consultation.

During the third phase, more detailed surveys and traffic, economic and environmental appraisals are undertaken as a basis for detailed design of the preferred option. Further consultations take place with local authorities and statutory undertakers and draft statutory orders are published under the terms of the 1980 Highways Act. If objections to these orders are received from affected parties which cannot be resolved by negotiation a Public Inquiry must be held into the orders. Inquiries are conducted by an independent Inspector, nominated by the Lord Chancellor, who hears the DTP's case for the scheme as proposed, the cases presented by objectors and, commonly, representations from local authorities, other interested groups and residents. The Inspector reports to the Secretaries of State

FIGURE 1: STAGES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR MAJOR TRUNK ROAD SCHEMES



Source: Dept of Transport (1986)

for Transport and for the Environment, making recommendations, and the Secretaries of State then decide jointly whether the scheme should go ahead and on any amendments to the statutory orders.

The fourth and final phase of the process involves acquisition of the necessary land, the letting of contracts by competitive tender, the construction of the road and its subsequent opening to traffic. The length of the whole process depends upon the size and complexity of the scheme and upon the extent of opposition from local groups and individuals; recent experience indicates an average period of some 14 years.⁵⁴

It is evident that this planning process is characterised by a relatively high degree of centralisation of decision making. All the major decisions - on whether a major scheme is needed and therefore should be included in the programme, on the preferred route and on whether, and in what form, the scheme should go ahead - are made by the 'Secretary of State' (i.e. at high levels in the DTp). Only relatively minor decisions on scheme design etc. are delegated to lower levels.

Once again, this is justified in terms of the accountability of Ministers to Parliament but in reality this provides very little opportunity for decisions to be challenged on the basis of alternative values and priorities. Once a scheme is incorporated into the White Paper programme there is a presumption that a major new road will be built subject to its being appraised as economically viable and environmentally acceptable.⁵⁵ However, it is not clear that the analysis which provides the basis for such incorporation is commonly of any more than a fairly preliminary nature; moreover, there would appear to be relatively little opportunity for affected groups and interests to influence decision making at this stage.⁵⁶ The Government's policy is generally to employ firms of consultants to undertake the Scheme Identification Studies and informal consultations with local authorities apparently are undertaken at this stage. Nevertheless, the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (SACTRA) have criticised the inadequacy of public consultation prior to the inclusion of a scheme in the programme and have recommended a greater role for local authorities in the development of trunk road proposals due to the greater 'openness' of their decision-making processes to local communities.⁵⁷

The Government has not been very receptive to proposals to increase the role of local authorities.⁵⁸ This is possibly because of the greater scope it would provide for influence of alternative values and interests in decision making on national roads, enhancing the potential for controversy over issues of need and policy and undermining the current rationale of the decision-making process which serves to protect Government policy from challenge. Thus, the process followed in relation to specific schemes effectively restricts debate to consideration of the relative merits of alternative route options for a given scheme in terms of their purely local impacts. It focuses debate on the question 'what is the best form of this road scheme?'

rather than 'what is the best approach to addressing' this transport problem?'

Opportunities for local communities to participate in the process are extremely limited. The public consultation exercise (which is not mandatory) presents people with various options for a given scheme. "This is probably the first time that many members of the public will hear about the proposals".⁵⁹ The terms of reference for such consultation are to obtain views on the form of the scheme and not on whether the scheme is necessary since the latter has been the subject of prior decision. At the Public Inquiry stage objectors can challenge the need for a scheme only on restricted technical grounds; they cannot challenge the Government's policy commitment to road-based solutions to transport problems since this has been subject to the 'democratic decision of Parliament'.⁶⁰

During the 1970's there developed considerable frustration on the part of certain interest groups with the decision making process for trunk roads. There were two main reasons for this. The first was this heavy circumscription of terms for consultation and participation in relation to specific schemes which excluded 'matters of policy' from debate and challenge. The second was the DTp's use of techniques for analysis, forecasting and appraisal in planning specific schemes which were perceived as producing biases in favour of roads investment. In particular, traffic forecasting methods were criticised as tending to over-estimate future traffic and the cost-benefit analysis approach to evaluation was criticised as placing undue emphasis on quantifiable economic criteria to the neglect of less tangible environmental and social impacts, many of which would count as 'disbenefits'.⁶¹ This frustration resulted in widespread objections to road schemes at public inquiries and in the disruption and delay of certain inquiries.⁶²

There are two possible interpretations of the underlying causes of such frustration and opposition. On the one hand, it can be seen as a result of a failure of procedures employed in decision making adequately to take into account the full range of impacts of road schemes and how these impacts affect different groups, and to permit these groups to represent their interests in the process whereby decisions are made about trade-offs between impacts. On the other hand, it can be seen as a result of a fundamental conflict of values, with opponents of road schemes rejecting the dominant ideology, perceived as structuring the decision-making process, and challenging the structure of power, perceived as supported by a process which preserves central control over decisions and limits the scope for influence of alternative interests.

The Government's response to these problems in the late 1970's indicated that it adopted the first of the above interpretations. Thus, in 1976 the Government announced a review of highway inquiry procedures "...to see what could be done to improve the presentation and intelligibility of the information which is provided to objectors and to make the arrangements generally

acceptable to all concerned".⁶³ At about the same time the Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment was set up, with Sir George Leitch as Chairman, to review the methods used by the DTp for analysis and appraisal of trunk road schemes. Of particular concern were methods of traffic forecasting and the relative weight given to economic and environmental factors in evaluation.

The Government's main concern in setting up these reviews, was to speed up the planning process and, in particular, to avoid delays due to opposition from local interest groups.⁶⁴ The results were recommendations for procedural and methodological reforms intended to promote more discussion and information for such groups and thereby restore their confidence in the fairness of the decision-making process. Thus, the highway inquiries review recommended the nomination of the Inspector by the Lord Chancellor, opportunities for objectors to question the DTp on traffic forecasts and design standards, improved pre-inquiry procedures to resolve objections where possible on the basis of fact, and the provision of better information for inquiry participants.⁶⁵ These proposals were related closely to the introduction of the annual Roads Policy White Paper which, we have seen, was perceived as providing for Parliamentary approval of policy and the justification for the restriction of the scope of public enquiries in relation to policy issues.⁶⁶

In its concern to 'improve' the decision-making process and to reduce the potential for conflict over road schemes, the Leitch Committee focused on two main issues. The first was the concern to improve internal management control:

"It is in the public interest that there should be a standard procedure through which control can be exercised... we believe a standard evaluation procedure to be a very valuable management tool which allows relatively minor decisions to be decentralised whilst preserving central control."⁶⁷

The second issue concerned the improvement of public understanding of, and confidence in, the decision-making process; thus, it was argued that:

"...the assessment should be generally comprehensible to the public and should commend their respect... so long as a significant number of informed people believe that current practice does not adequately consider their and society's interests then public inquiries will be acrimonious, lengthy and expensive."⁶⁸

Therefore, the concern of the Leitch Committee was to improve procedures both for 'internal' planning and management control within the DTp and for 'external' management of the way in which local interests are brought to bear upon decisions. The 'Framework' approach to scheme appraisal was proposed as the basic means to improved effectiveness in decision making in terms of the two attributes: 'control' and 'consent'. The Framework represents an extension of the cost-benefit analysis approach to

scheme evaluation to take account of broader non-economic ('environmental' and 'social') impacts some of which are not quantifiable. The essence of the Framework is to set out in tabular form all the relevant impacts of scheme options, indicating how they would affect different groups, so that decision makers can "...trade off the advantages and disadvantages for each alternative... and... reach a decision on which one should be built."⁶⁹ Therefore, the Framework permits a measure of the overall 'value' of a scheme to be derived (as a mix of quantitative and qualitative attributes) which was seen by the Leitch Committee as providing the basis for determining rational merit ratings and relative priorities in the programme according to a consistent calculus, and, in this way, permitting more effective management of the programme. In addition, the Framework would help strengthen central control by ensuring that minor decisions taken at lower levels in the DTP hierarchy are consistent with higher level goals.⁷⁰

As regards the 'external management of consent', the Framework was seen as providing a generally comprehensible approach, which could command public respect, for identifying how different groups would be affected by road schemes. Used in public consultation on scheme options and at public inquiries, it provides an approach to managing the influence of local interests in the decision making process which, if it gains the confidence of the groups involved, serves to enhance the perceived legitimacy of the process. In this way the process can proceed more quickly and effectively - affected groups will have confidence that their interests are being taken into account and will be more prepared to accept the trade-offs inherent in the diverse scheme impacts.

5.4 Framework Appraisal in Scheme Planning

These procedural and methodological reforms proposed in the late 1970's have been incorporated into the trunk road planning process under the banner of the dual objectives of 'efficiency' and 'fairness'. These two objectives relate to the two dimensions of decision making discussed in Section 2 above viz. analytical and procedural rationality on the one hand and political power and participation on the other. These two dimensions are reflected in Leitch's perspective on the value of the Framework approach:

"...it can provide an intelligible means of presenting comprehensive information to the public, and can help them to identify how the different groups will be affected. It can also provide a basis for designers and decision makers to reach rational judgements on schemes, taking into account the full range of benefits and disbenefits."⁷¹

This perspective can be seen as underpinned by two fundamental assumptions. The first is that embodied in the rational model of decision making discussed in Section 2 above viz. the more logical procedure and analysis is applied to decision making the

more rational will be the process and outcomes. 'Better' decisions are seen as contingent upon the application of formal techniques of analysis and appraisal to clarify the relative merits of alternative means in relation to given ends. The ends concerned (objectives/values) are given to decision making on specific schemes by terms of reference which exclude government policy and objectives from scrutiny on the grounds that these are matters for democratic decision of Parliament. Public participation and consultation is restricted to issues concerning the local distribution of gains and losses with a view to obtaining 'fairness' in this distribution; broader dimensions of distributional issues are, again, set by Government policy, determined by prior decision which are not open to question in the consideration of specific schemes. Fairness in the local distribution of costs and benefits can be obtained through procedures which provide affected parties with better information and promote discussion, negotiation and compromise. This brings us to the second underlying assumption of pluralist consensus - that political power is exercised on the basis of a fundamental value consensus in society and that all groups' interests can be accommodated through the institutions of representative democracy supplemented where appropriate by direct participatory procedures.

These assumptions are consistent with the dominant ideological themes discussed in Section 4 above. In effect the procedural and methodological reforms introduced in the trunk road planning process can be seen as responding to criticism by refining and extending procedures in accordance with these prevailing ideological themes. Thus, in the Framework approach, a wider range of scheme impacts has been brought into the ambit of 'rational technique', incorporated into the technocratic (or 'econocratic') logic of cost-benefit analysis which, critics argue, promotes efforts to quantify the unquantifiable and to impose market exchange values on environmental and social qualities. The scope of influence of professionals and experts is thereby extended through renewed efforts at quantification in the name of consistency and rationality and through their role in applying the Framework in the decision-making process. A basis for management of public consultation and participation is provided to give local groups greater confidence that their interests are being accommodated. Finally, a basis is provided for more effective management of the trunk road planning process within the DTp to ensure that local decisions are consistent with the parameters of central control.

However, in terms of the contribution of the Framework approach to improving the rationality and effectiveness of the trunk road decision-making process, two reservations arise from this critique. First, the primary use of the Framework is to aid the process of choice between route options for a given scheme; it is used after a decision has been made that a scheme should be included in the programme. We argued earlier that this latter decision produces a heavy presumption in favour of a major new road of some form but such decisions are based upon only fairly preliminary analyses. Indeed, decision making at this level is

not open to scrutiny and so it is not possible to determine the extent to which political considerations are important. It would appear that the Framework approach is not widely used as a basis for establishing a broad definition of 'value for money' of schemes and for establishing priorities so as to promote the most effective use of resources.⁷² In practice, therefore, the Framework would appear to have a limited impact on the 'rationality' of the decision-making process in the broadest sense. The scope of its contribution to rationality is mainly focused on the consideration of the local impacts of alternative route alignments for a given scheme, in particular, the distribution of gains and losses between different groups, within a context shaped by prior decisions which reflect the ideological themes, values and interests promoted by the Government and which are 'given' to decision making at scheme level.

The second reservation about the contribution of the Framework to 'rational' decision making follows from the first. This contribution rests in large part upon its ability to promote acceptance by different groups of the balance of gains and losses produced by a scheme. However, if controversy over road schemes is due, to any significant degree, to conflict over fundamental ideological, value commitments, then the scope for agreement and consensus on the basis of the 'rational' analysis and discussion of the distribution of local scheme impacts will be limited. In this event, opposition to road schemes will not simply be based upon the perception of adverse local impacts but will derive from the rejection of the dominant ideological themes and values which are perceived as underpinning the Government's objectives and policies and structuring the decision-making process. The latter, however, are not open to discussion and challenge in the consideration of specific schemes producing a situation of frustration and unresolved conflict in which a decision to proceed with a scheme simply over-rides the views of some opponents.

Therefore, to the extent that controversy over major trunk road schemes is about fundamental values, and to the extent that the dominant values expressed in government objectives and policies remain, in practice, insulated from effective scrutiny and challenge by opposing groups, then conflict over road schemes is likely to persist in spite of the attempts of the Framework approach to increase 'rationality' and in spite of the procedural reforms to highway inquiries to increase 'fairness'. Such methodological and procedural reforms do not address the fundamental issues of the influence of dominant ideological themes, values and interests on decision making and of the broader structure of the decision-making process which preserves central control and limits the scope for influence of alternative values and interests.

The Framework approach can be seen, then, as performing a dual role in relation to both the 'rationality' and 'legitimation' of the trunk road planning process. As regards rationality there are two aspects. On the one hand, it seeks to provide an enhanced measure of the 'value' of a road scheme by extending the

framework of cost-benefit analysis to accommodate environmental as well as economic impacts. On the other hand, it seeks to identify how this wider range of impacts affects different groups and to promote discussion and acceptance of a particular distribution of gains and losses. As regards legitimation, the Framework seeks to persuade groups and individuals affected by a road scheme that their interests and, indeed, a broader 'public interest', are taken fully into account through the introduction of this more 'rational' approach to decision making on specific schemes. It can be argued that, by focusing on improved rationality and fairness at the level of consideration of specific scheme options, the Framework approach serves to legitimise the broader decision-making process, concealing the influence of dominant ideological themes, values and interests in the wider process behind a 'rationalistic' facade. It thereby promotes widespread acceptance of decisions which, in reality, reflect these influences by giving the appearance that they are outcomes from a rational procedure.

6. Decision Making for Local Roads

6.1 Central Government Control over Local Decision Making

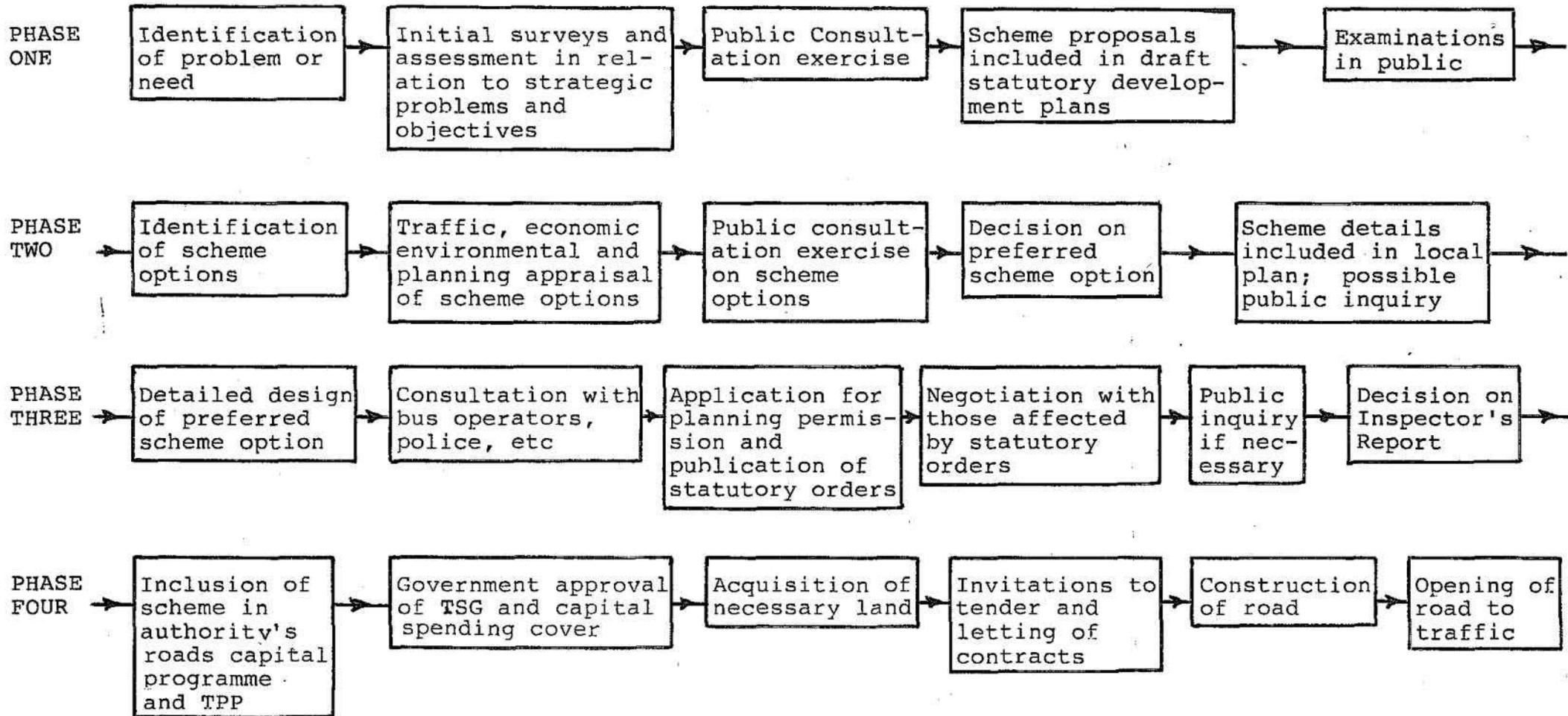
The planning and provision of non-trunk roads is the responsibility of local authorities subject to a framework of policy and control maintained by central government. The responsible authorities are county councils in the non-metropolitan areas, district councils in the provincial conurbations, and borough councils in London. This has been the situation since 1986 when the GLC and metropolitan county councils, which had responsibilities for conurbation-wide transport planning, were abolished.

The main stages in the planning process for major local authority roads are illustrated in Figure 2.⁷³ Four main phases can be identified corresponding broadly to those described in the previous section relating to trunk road schemes. The first phase involves the identification of a problem and the assessment that a road scheme is needed to address the problem. The impetus may be from local communities, elected members or professionals; schemes may arise out of transportation studies undertaken by authorities, possibly commissioned from external consultants. Broad scheme proposals at this stage will be based on some combination of technical appraisal and political impetus; the situation will vary between authorities as will the emphasis on public consultation. Broad proposals will eventually be included in draft statutory development plans which are subject to an Examination in Public before approval by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

In the second phase of the process alternative specific designs for the scheme are evaluated and public consultations undertaken as a basis for deciding on the specific form and cost of the scheme. Again, the approach to technical appraisal and public consultation and the degree of political input from elected members varies considerably between authorities. There are no standard appraisal procedures for local authorities although, as we shall see later, the Government has an influence on the process via arrangements for financing road schemes. Local communities have an additional statutory basis for influence at this stage since major scheme details must be included in Local Plans which are subject to consultation and a possible public inquiry. In the third phase, following detailed scheme design, authorities must publish a planning application and the necessary statutory orders which may be subject to a public inquiry if objectors cannot be satisfied through negotiation. In the light of the Inspector's recommendations the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Transport decide jointly whether to grant permission and confirm the orders.

Once a scheme has been thus approved, an authority will include it in its Roads Capital Programme which must be submitted to the DTp in the annual 'Transport Policies and Programme' (TPP) submission to seek capital spending approval and, if eligible,

FIGURE 2: STAGES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR MAJOR LOCAL AUTHORITY ROAD SCHEMES



Source: Dept of Transport (1986)

Transport Supplementary Grant (this is discussed further below). When spending approval is received the authority can proceed the construction of the scheme.

Decision making by local authorities within this process is subject to a significant degree of influence by central government via a 'control framework' which comprises three main dimensions. First, the functions, responsibilities and powers of local government are laid down in legislation as approved by Parliament and all decisions and actions by local authorities which have resource implications must receive sanction from this legislation (i.e. must be 'intra vires'). In our system of one-party majority government, the government in power can enact legislation to define with considerable precision the scope of local authorities' activities, the procedures which they must follow in making decisions on resource allocation, and the way in which resources can be raised to finance their sanctioned activities. The main legislative provision covering the functions of local government in England and Wales is the Local Government Act of 1972 but the present Government has enacted a substantial body of legislation over the past decade which has affected the responsibilities, procedures and financing of local government, reflecting a concern to achieve a greater degree of central control over local authorities and their policy-making activities.⁷⁴ The responsibilities of local authorities in relation to the provision, improvement and maintenance of roads are covered mainly by the 1980 Highways Act but legislation affecting the financing of roads expenditure is also of considerable importance to local decision making on roads; we consider this further below.

The second dimension of central control operates at the level of local authorities' policies which, in certain respects, must gain the approval of central government. Thus, authorities' policies for the development and use of land, including the development of the road system, must be set out in statutory development plans (Structure Plans and Local Plans in county areas and Unitary Development Plans in London and the metropolitan areas). These plans must receive the approval of the Secretary of State for the Environment. The transport policies thus approved provide the policy framework for authorities' annual 'Transport Policies and Programmes' (TPP) submissions to the Secretary of State for Transport, which are required to demonstrate how authorities' proposed expenditure programmes for roads relate to the approved policies. The Government scrutinises such programmes and sanctions capital spending power to cover their implementation to the extent that they are consistent with the Government's transport and public expenditure policies. Through control over the allocation of capital spending power the Government maintains an important degree of influence over local authorities' decisions on road programmes; we discuss this further below. Influence is also achieved at the level of policies and programmes through advice notes and circulars; in particular, the annual circular relating to authorities' preparation of TPPs provides guidance on the Government's requirements and preferences in relation to various policy

issues.

The third dimension of central government control is financial. Central control over local Government finance is embodied in legislation and the Government has enacted a substantial body of such legislation over the past decade to change the control systems and to attempt to achieve a greater degree of control over local authorities' expenditure and the way in which it is financed.⁷⁵ Capital expenditure on improvements to local roads is financed mainly through borrowing with debt repayments made from current expenditure financed from local rate revenue and Rate Support Grant (RSG) from central government. The level of RSG payments is subject to strict control and the Government has powers to limit individual authorities' rate increases. Authorities can finance some capital expenditure from capital receipts according to rules laid down by central government and their total capital expenditure on all services is subject to control through capital allocations. The capital allocation for transport capital expenditure is decided by the Government on the basis of TPP submissions; however, authorities are free to vire allocation between services within the total notified by the Government. The system of expenditure control will change in April 1990 when the 'community charge' will replace domestic rates and the focus of capital expenditure control will revert to borrowing through 'credit approvals'.⁷⁶

More specific influence and control is achieved by central Government over local authorities' roads policies and programmes through arrangements for payment of Transport Supplementary Grant (TSG) to support the construction and improvement of roads 'of more than local importance' i.e. local authority roads which carry significant proportions of longer distance traffic. It is the Government's policy that the construction of such roads should be promoted to complement the development of the trunk road system in order to achieve the Government's objectives for roads discussed in the section 5.1 above. Since 1985/86 the Government has restricted TSG to support for capital expenditure (at a rate of 50%) on such roads and authorities must compete for grant from a cash-limited sum on the basis of submissions in their TPPs which must provide justifications of proposed TSG-eligible expenditure and detailed appraisals (economic, safety and environmental) for 'major schemes' costing £1 million or more. TSG paid in respect of such major schemes is hypothecated and closely monitored and scrutinised by the DTP; authorities may also receive a 'block TSG' for minor schemes of less than £1 million. Capital allocations are given for expenditure supported by TSG; the remaining, non-TSG element of authorities' roads programmes is unlikely to be covered fully by capital allocation because of assumptions made by the Government concerning the availability to authorities of spending power from capital receipts.

The Government is able to maintain a high degree of influence over local authorities' roads programmes via arrangements for TSG. Grant support is now directed at encouraging local authorities to build and improve roads which play a significant

role in meeting the needs of non-local traffic i.e. roads to which authorities might not normally give high priority given their primary concern to meet the local needs of their areas. Through TSG, therefore, the Government is able to influence the priorities of local authorities to be consistent with the Government's own objectives and policies which, as we have seen, stress in particular, the promotion of economic growth through reduced costs for industrial and commercial traffic and relief for communities of the environmental effects of such traffic. Arrangements for monitoring major TSG-supported schemes ensure that authorities keep to agreed programmes.

The degree of this influence is illustrated by roads expenditure trends in recent years. Whilst stating a wish to promote local roads expenditure the Government has restricted capital allocations over the past three years or so on the grounds that, in aggregate, local authorities have substantial accumulated spending power from capital receipts which they can use to support roads expenditure. In practice, however, many authorities have not been able to conform to this assumption either because they are not able to generate receipts on the scale assumed or because other services (e.g. housing, education, social services) take priority for those receipts which are available. This has meant that their roads expenditure has had to be constrained; thus, in 1987/88 total budgeted roads capital expenditure by local authorities in England was some 24% below the Government's planned level. However, this constraint has affected mainly non-TSG expenditure i.e. that directed by local authorities at purely local needs; TSG-supported expenditure has been sustained and, consequently, comprises a growing proportion of total local roads allocation. In a recent study of a sample of local authorities the increase in this proportion between 1986/87 and 1987/88 was found to be from 72% to 83%.⁷⁷

It is clear, therefore, that central Government is able to exercise considerable influence over local authorities' decision making in relation to roads via the framework of legislation, via requirements for scrutiny and approval of policies, and via arrangements for controlling the financing of local roads programmes. More generally, through this 'control framework' the Government attempts to ensure that decision making by local authorities produces outcomes which are consistent with the Government's own transport objectives, policies and priorities, and, therefore, with the dominant ideological commitments and interests promoted thereby.

6.2 The Growth of Central Control

This control framework can be seen as managing the 'balance of power' between central and local government, determining the scope for local discretion within centrally-defined parameters. Indeed, a tension between central control and local autonomy can be seen as inherent in our political system with its long tradition of strong local government with considerable spending and tax-raising powers but subject to controls exercised by central government via Parliament. However, the appropriate

'balance of power' between centre and localities will always be a matter of contention and this balance is open to change by central government subject to its ability to gain support for and enact Parliamentary legislation. The present government has been able to affect a significant shift in this balance in favour of central government due to its large majority in Parliament. This has enhanced the ability of central government to ensure that the policies and programmes of local authorities are more consistent with the Government's objectives and priorities.

Indeed, one of the main factors underlying the Government's preoccupation over the past decade with achieving greater control over local government spending, which has resulted in this shift in the balance of power, has been a conflict at the level of ideology and values between the Government and some local authorities. This conflict was focussed primarily on the GLC and metropolitan county councils (MCCs) which, following the local elections in May 1981, came under the control of labour administrations which developed policies and priorities very different from those of the Government. This resulted in large increases in the level of spending by these authorities at a time when the Government was seeking to reduce public expenditure and, more specifically, large increases in spending on public transport at a time when the Government's policies and priorities emphasised more road building. The Government failed to resolve this conflict through changes in expenditure control mechanisms and eventually enacted legislation to abolish these authorities in the form of the 1985 Local Government Act. This supports the argument in the previous section indicating the importance of values and ideological commitments in conflicts over policy issues and the inadequacy of measures addressing the 'technical' dimensions of such conflicts to resolve them.

Through legislation to abolish the GLC and MCCs and to deregulate local bus transport (in the 1985 Transport Act), the Government has succeeded in achieving a substantial change in the pattern of local authorities' transport expenditure and provision. The most significant feature of this change has been the decline in expenditure by local authorities on public transport relative to roads. Thus, between 1984/85 and 1987/88 total local authority expenditure (revenue and capital) on public transport declined by some 63% in real terms while that on roads increased by 0.6%.⁷⁸ This pattern of change can be seen as consistent with the ideological commitments and interests promoted by the Government.

Thus, attempts to restrict the level of spending are consistent with the Government's broader programme to reduce the role and scope of the public sector and to promote private sector capital accumulation. This programme can be seen as having a basis in ideological commitments to the role of the market in promoting material growth reinforced by the 'New Right' critique of the public sector, but also as reflecting the interests of private capital promoted by the present Government. Attempts to influence the composition of local authority spending, manifested in the decline in expenditure on public transport, can be seen

as reflecting moves to direct the reduced level of public expenditure increasingly to provide support to private sector capital accumulation at the expense of programmes directed to achieve social and environmental objectives. Thus, the role of roads in supporting economic growth is emphasised by the Government in its encouragement of local authority expenditure in this area while authorities' low fares policies justified by social and environmental considerations were specifically attacked by the Government during the early to mid-1980s when it was attempting to discourage local authority expenditure in that area. The deregulation of public transport reflects, again, the commitment to the market and to providing the conditions to promote the profitability of the private sector.

6.3 The TSG system and the Extension of Central Control

As we have seen, an important measure introduced by the Government as part of the broader programme of extended central control was the reform of the TSG system in 1985/86 which changed this grant from a block, unencumbered support for integrated local transport programmes (including public transport, traffic management, road building and maintenance) to specific support for roads which play a significant non-local role (as discussed previously). In its original form, therefore, TSG under-pinned local authorities' autonomy and discretion in formulating co-ordinated plans to meet the perceived transport problems and needs of local communities; in its new form, TSG is designed to persuade local authorities to construct roads which are not primarily designed to meet the needs of local communities. This radical difference in scope and purpose reflects the Government's broader objective of circumscribing more tightly the scope for the exercise of political choice at local level to produce transport policies and programmes which are at odds with the Government's own policies and priorities. The deregulation of local bus services, the cessation of government support for local car parking provision and the general restrictions on capital allocations available for non-TSG programmes have served further to erode the scope for local authorities to develop co-ordinated and integrated transport plans to meet the perceived needs of the communities they represent.⁷⁹ Indeed, the very notion of 'planning for need' is being undermined by the government's commitment to making local transport provision increasingly subject to market forces.

Under the present regime of Government controls, then, local authorities have an incentive to develop programmes of road schemes which will attract TSG support, and there is evidence to indicate that authorities' decision making is indeed being influenced in line with the Government's objectives.⁸⁰ There are two possible reasons for this. The first is financial: TSG substitutes for borrowing and therefore reduces debt charges which can be perceived as significant in a context of restraint on revenue expenditure. Second, there is evidence to suggest that, in general, highways committees of local authorities tend to have some difficulty arguing for capital resources relative to the demands from such services as education, housing and

social services.⁸¹ Therefore, in order to ensure the continuation of a roads programme the highways committee and the professional engineers of an authority have an incentive to develop TSG eligible schemes as the only guarantee of capital allocation. This has been recognised by the DTp:

"There are strong indications that TSG helps to boost local authorities' overall capital expenditure on roads. Authorities' highway engineers certainly see TSG as important in providing guaranteed resources for their programmes... Increasingly it is being seen as the easiest and sometimes the only passport to roads capital allocations: evidence is beginning to emerge that authorities are in consequence directing their bids towards the expenditure most likely to receive TSG support."⁸²

It is possible to discern in this trend something of a shift in the balance of influence on roads decision making in local authorities between politicians and professionals. The annual budgetary process in local authorities resolves issues of resource allocation between services and, notwithstanding developments in 'corporate planning' in recent years, this process remains essentially 'political' in nature. Thus, even given comprehensive information about the contribution of all service programmes to the authority's objectives and the relative 'value', in these terms, of proposed new programmes (and many authorities do not yet achieve this), decisions about priorities remain a matter for elected members and will be conditioned by values, ideological commitments and the influence of various local interests brought to bear upon the authority.⁸³

As indicated above, there is evidence that, in this political process of priority-setting, roads expenditure tends to be subordinated to the demands of such services as education, social services, housing, economic development and leisure and community services. This is reflected both in the distribution of available capital allocation between services and in the use of capital receipts which are available to the authority.⁸⁴ We saw earlier that prior to the abolition of the GLC and MCC s and the reform of the TSG system, the political priorities of these authorities resulted in a greater emphasis on expenditure on public transport support than on roads. The availability of TSG with guaranteed capital allocation counter-acts this pattern of political priorities and gives the highways professionals in local authorities a 'vested interest' in promoting the development of TSG -eligible schemes as the best (or, indeed, only) means of preserving the capital programme which constitutes their basic 'raison d'etre'.

Therefore, it is possible to see a weakening of local political influences on decision making on local roads due to the operation of the current TSG system. This is recognised in the recent DTp study which found that "...some members are said to welcome TSG precisely because it helps to take awkward decisions out of their hands."⁸⁵ Decision making on TSG-eligible schemes becomes an increasingly 'technical' exercise from the local authority's

point of view, with the process tending to be reduced towards one of preparing and submitting applications to the DTP and awaiting its decision. In this process the highways professionals play an enhanced role. This contrasts with the non TSG element of the road programme where authorities have to make decisions on the resources (capital allocation and receipts) to be made available in the light of competing needs in other service areas and it would seem that such decisions are primarily 'political' in nature.

In relation to TSG - eligible road schemes, therefore, an important question is how the DTP makes decisions on which schemes should receive grant support. For all major schemes costing £1 million or more local authorities have to submit to the DTP detailed information including an assessment of the estimated benefits of the schemes (the so-called "Annex B submission"). An estimate of economic benefits must be provided, in accordance with procedures set out in the DTP's COBA User Manual,⁸⁶ together with an assessment of the impacts on road safety, the environment, the local community and local industry and commerce. The DTP indicates that the latter impacts should be quantified where possible.⁸⁷ The Annex B submission is designed to indicate the extent to which a schemes satisfies the criteria for TSG support and to permit an assessment of its value for money and relative merit compared to other schemes competing for the cash-limit sum available for TSG.

The Annex B submission provides a technical/analytical basis for decision making by the DTP and it is clear that it plays an important role in decision on which schemes should be grant-supported.⁸⁸ This implies that highways professionals also play an important role. Thus, there is extensive liaison between the professionals in local authorities and their respective Regional Offices of the DTP over the preparation of Annex B submissions and over authorities' progress with their roads programmes. Following the submission of TPPs by authorities, professionals in the Regional Offices assess the submissions and make recommendations on individual candidate schemes for grant to DTP headquarters. Value for money will be an important factor but so also will be other factors relating to a knowledge of the state of the road programme in individual authorities (e.g. ability to start and progress a scheme). The 'settlement co-ordinator' at DTP headquarters considers all regional recommendations and draws up a 'draft settlement' for comment by senior management in the regions and at headquarters before presentation to Ministers for their decision.⁸⁹

It is difficult to obtain evidence on the relative importance of 'technical' and 'political' considerations in this decision making process. The recent efficiency scrutiny of the TSG system limited comment on the political dimension of the process to the following statement:

"Because both central and local government are affected there is always a political element to the TSG settlement, and so Ministers are bound to be closely involved".⁹⁰

Presumably, this political element will relate to some consideration of the balance of resource allocation between regions and between local authorities within regions in accordance with prevailing concerns within the Government. Nevertheless, it would appear that the technical/analytical dimension of the process is of considerable importance reflected in the role played by professional recommendations.

6.4 The Influence of Scheme Appraisal Techniques

Therefore, the process of developing local authority programmes of TSG - eligible major road schemes appears increasingly 'technical' in nature with an important role played by assessment procedures and professionals, and with local authorities exercising political discretion. The main opportunity for influence of local political considerations is in the initial perception of a problem or a need for a new road where elected members may respond to local interests and press for a scheme to be developed for inclusion in the authority's plans and programmes. Nevertheless, the DTP's requirement for Annex B assessments means that only schemes which can be justified on the necessary technical grounds will succeed in attracting TSG and the capital allocation cover required for it to be included in an authority's road programme. Under the Government's capital expenditure controls authorities would have considerable difficulties including major schemes in their roads plans and programmes which were not strong candidates for TSG support.⁹¹ In this situation authorities have an incentive to strengthen the technical basis of their road planning process and, indeed, many authorities undertake or commission transportation studies' to this end. Such studies, frequently undertaken by external consultants employing highly technical procedures of analysis and evaluation, serve to erode further the role of political influences in the generation of road schemes, and to strengthen the role of professionals in the road planning process.

Indeed, local authorities are being encouraged by the DTP to adopt more 'rational' approaches to scheme appraisal in order to promote better value for money for resources allocated to road construction and improvement. We have seen that, in applications for TSG, authorities are asked for a rigorous economic assessment, "quantified where possible".⁹² Moreover, the DTP is concerned also to improve the approach to appraisal of smaller road schemes in order to permit capital allocations to be set "in a more objective way".⁹³ This more thorough application of rational appraisal procedures is seen as desirable to "highlight the effects of decisions taken for non-economic reasons".⁹⁴ There is concern that in many local authorities "the priorities for roads expenditure are evidently decided by political imperatives";⁹⁵ therefore "a clearly understood assessment technique should help to make these sorts of political decisions more obvious and hence less easy for an authority to carry out without clear justification".⁹⁶

At the present time local authorities employ a wide range of procedures for the appraisal of road schemes and for determining priorities in their roads capital programmes. A recent study of the use of priorities assessment techniques (PATs) in British local authorities found that "a distinct lack of uniformity and standardisation exists between local authorities in their methods and procedures for priority assessment" of highway schemes.⁹⁷ Many have developed their own methods to suit their particular circumstances and requirements. Most use a points scoring approach in comparing problems or schemes in terms of a range of impacts on traffic, accidents, the environment and broader planning and development policies. Some authorities use the Leitch Framework and/or COBA instead of, or in addition to, their own PATs. Considerable variation exists in the way in which PATs are used in the road planning process from a focus on problem analysis through broad scheme 'sifting' to detailed scheme evaluation and prioritisation. Moreover, it was found that "a number of authorities actually have no formal PAT, relying on officers' judgement and the political process".⁹⁸

The above study concluded that some degree of standardisation in terms of "desirable and broadly compatible logical properties"⁹⁹ is desirable and this view is supported by the DTP.¹⁰⁰ The recent efficiency scrutiny of local roads expenditure recommended that the DTP should require authorities to use the Framework approach, as used in trunk road assessment (and discussed in the previous section), for major local road schemes submitted for TSG support incorporating a COBA or equivalent economic assessment. As regards smaller schemes, whether TSG-eligible or not, it was argued that a standard approach was desirable for the presentation of appraisal information by local authorities in their TPPS "along the lines of a simplified framework".¹⁰¹

Therefore, it would appear that the trend is towards increased standardisation of road scheme appraisal around the Framework approach in order to promote a more rational and formal procedure in which, moreover, economic assessment is clearly seen as playing a predominant role in the determination of 'value for money', the major stated concern of the DTP and Treasury in resource allocation decisions. This trend can be seen as having certain important implications. Thus, the logic of assessment is increasingly one in which non-economic impacts of road schemes are traded-off against economic benefits in order to obtain a measure of the opportunity cost of decisions not to choose schemes with the highest quantitative economic benefits. This produces an inherent pressure to quantify and, indeed, derive monetary valuations, of such non-economic effects in order to increase the precision and rationality of the assessment process. Decision making becomes increasingly reduced to a matter of calculation on the basis of market exchange values in line with the dominant ideological commitment to market exchange processes in the promotion of material economic growth. Maximisation of 'value for money' becomes synonymous with support for the process of private capital accumulation.

A second important aspect of this trend concerns the implications

for local political control and discretion in decision making on roads. The increasing emphasis on the need to provide enhanced and standardised technical justifications of all road schemes put forward in TPPs in application for TSG or capital allocation support, indicates a growing tendency for the resources sanctioned by central government for use by local authorities to be effectively hypothecated to specific schemes the decision on which lies with the DTp. The more that capital expenditure approval by central government becomes contingent upon DTp approval of specific scheme assessments, and the more that the DTp monitors the performance of authorities' implemented schemes, then the less will be the role of local political choice in the development of local authorities' road programmes.

Thus, the ability of authorities to choose schemes on the basis of local political priorities will be effectively reduced. The notion that a more rigorous assessment should permit the opportunity cost of 'political considerations' to be identified is consistent with the preservation of local political choice if full control over decisions remains at the local level. Local councils are then accountable to their electorates for the trade-offs made; for example, economic benefits foregone to secure environmental benefits. However, in a situation where the DTp decides which schemes should be approved for grant or capital allocation, and where there is competition between authorities for scarce capital spending cover, those schemes which forego economic benefits to achieve other objectives are less likely to gain DTp approval, given the Government's stated priorities for roads investment. In effect, local authorities could be deterred from developing and including in their programmes schemes which they believe will not receive high priority from the DTp; in order to maximise their prospects of capital spending cover they are more likely to conform to the DTp's wish to see schemes with high economic benefits.

Much will depend on the extent to which the DTp extends the approach currently applied to major TSG schemes to smaller and to non-TSG schemes i.e. the extent to which there is an increasing degree of effective hypothecation of capital spending cover to specific schemes. In this event, not only will there be an increase in central government control over roads decision making, but also an increase in the influence of professionals which, as described above, has occurred in relation to TSG schemes. Thus, the role of professionals will be enhanced with the requirement for more formal appraisal of smaller schemes and authorities are likely to experience pressure from their highways professionals to give greater priority to schemes with larger economic benefits in order to maximise the prospects for capital spending cover to preserve the roads capital programme which constitutes their professional *raison d'etre*. The role of DTp professionals will also be enhanced through increased liaison with their local authority counterparts over scheme appraisal and progress with road programmes. In this situation, elected members are likely effectively to delegate decision making on local roads to the professionals as a largely 'technical' exercise conditioned by criteria laid down by central government.

The effect of such a development would be to reduce further the scope of local autonomy and discretion and the extent to which local authorities are accountable to their local electorates for the use of public resources rather than to central government. This is consistent with the Government's broader programme which, we have seen, involves making local authorities more accountable to central government in the use of resources in order to achieve greater central control over both the level and composition of local authorities' expenditure. The trend discussed above further enhances the ability of the Government to promote spending on local roads in line with its main priorities viz. to provide benefits to business traffic thus supporting the process of private capital accumulation.

6.5 The Scope and Influence of Local Autonomy

Therefore, we can see that the trend is for central government to achieve increasing influence and control over the development of local authorities' road policies and programmes - over the level of decision making which is crucial to the determination of the scale of resources used and the broad distribution of the benefits of those resources between different groups and interests. Within these parameters more specific distributional issues are raised during the planning of local road schemes which must be resolved in the decision-making process. These are considered through the process of scheme generation and appraisal by local authorities. The corollary of the trend towards reduced local political choice at the level of roads policies and programmes is that such local discretion becomes relatively more focused on the issue of the distribution of specific gains and losses between local groups due to alternative scheme designs

However, even at this level local choice in relation to major TSG schemes is influenced by the DTP's emphasis on quantified economic benefits which can lead to pressure on decision making in local authorities to select scheme options with greater economic benefits in order to enhance the prospects of attracting TSG. Moves towards more formal appraisal requirements for smaller non-TSG schemes as a basis for sanctioning capital spending cover, as discussed above, are likely to extend the scope of this influence. The implication would be a tendency for the benefits to road users in terms of time savings and reduced vehicle operating costs to be given greater weight in decision making than the adverse impact of schemes on local communities in terms of, for example, noise, visual intrusion, disruption to present activities, loss of environmental amenity etc.

Nevertheless, although the trend is towards increasing central government influence, towards a 'narrowing' of the parameters of the 'control framework' within which local authority decision making on roads takes place, there remains an important degree of autonomy and discretion for authorities in decisions on scheme options. Central government's 'control framework' provides a set

of guidelines, incentives and sanctions which influence but cannot determine behaviour; the degree of conformity will vary between local authorities within certain parameters. This degree of autonomy for local authorities is reflected in two characteristics of the local roads planning process in terms of which it differs from the process for major trunk roads discussed in the previous section.

The first characteristic is the lack of a standard procedure for the appraisal of local road schemes as indicated above in the discussion of PATs. Whereas, as we have seen, the DTP has standardised the approach to trunk road appraisal around the use of the Framework, based on COBA, local authorities employ a wide variety of approaches giving variable (and usually less) weight to economic evaluation.¹⁰² One possible reason for this is the limits to the applicability of COBA in urban contexts where national traffic growth and fixed trip matrix assumptions are likely to be unrealistic.¹⁰³ However, perhaps the primary reason is the fact that the main period of development of formal techniques of transport analysis and appraisal occurred when local authorities had a high degree of autonomy with no pressure from central government for standardisation. Indeed, one of the traditional benefits of strong, autonomous local government is seen as the diversity of approaches to policy making and management which develops and which promotes innovation and learning.¹⁰⁴

Thus, the original TPP/TSG system was introduced in 1975 to promote the concept embodied in the 1968 Transport Act of comprehensive and integrated transport planning to meet local needs. As a block, 'unhypothecated' grant it served to strengthen local authorities' autonomy by providing resources for them to use at their own discretion to meet local needs.¹⁰⁵ In this context techniques for integrated transport planning were applied by authorities according to their own perceptions of need which encouraged a diversity of approaches. That this diversity is now perceived as problematical by the DTP¹⁰⁶ can be seen as reflecting the change in thinking by central government in recent years about the scope of local authority autonomy embodied in the reform of the TSG system and the extensions of central control and influence which we have identified.

A further significant feature of decision making on local road schemes arising from this tradition of relative autonomy for local authorities is the role played by local elected politicians which, as discussed above, is also the subject of DTP concern. Indeed, our arguments above imply a direct relationship between the uneven development of formal appraisal techniques and the influence of local political considerations in roads decision making. Increased standardisation of techniques as a basis for central government approval of capital spending power would, we have argued, tend to erode the scope of local political choice. Such choice is exercised by elected members of local authorities via whom local political considerations are brought to bear upon the roads planning process. There is significantly more scope for such considerations to influence decision making on local

roads than on national, trunk, roads. Thus, SACTRA indicated that "...we have been informed by local authorities that the involvement of their elected members at all stages enables local opinion to be better reflected in the schemes which are considered."¹⁰⁷

'Local opinion' is brought to bear upon local roads decision making via elected members (in terms of the 'constituency' they represent) and via 'pressure groups' who may be consulted or who may have to lobby the authority or individual members on specific issues. Authorities may also undertake public opinion surveys to obtain broader-based views. Local groups have the opportunity to give their views on authorities' statutory development plans and TPPs and for individual road schemes there are consultation exercises and, commonly, public inquiries. Much depends on the receptiveness of elected members to the views expressed and this in turn will depend both on the extent to which the substance and promoters of views 'key in' with the majority political make-up of the authority and on the channels used to express views (e.g. whether groups have direct access to certain members or must make their views known via officials). Thus, influences are 'processed' and interpreted by members through a framework of political beliefs deriving from party-based values and ideological commitments and by officials through a framework of professional values and commitments.

The above influences are embedded in the on-going operation of local political processes and are not necessarily visible to empirical analysis of decision-making processes. The exercise of power at such levels may be of more importance in determining decisions and outcomes than the more formal and visible exercises at public consultation and participation which are undertaken by local authorities in the roads planning process. Nevertheless, such exercises are more extensive than those undertaken in the planning of national roads and, in formal terms, provide more opportunity for local people to influence decision making. However, there are two factors which can be seen as limiting the significance and importance of such consultation exercises.

The first is the theme of the dominant ideology identified in section four above assigning authority to elected representatives in decision making, the corollary of which is limited popular experience of participatory modes of decision making - the decision-making culture does not encourage direct participation. Consequently, formal participation and consultation exercises tend not to attract a large popular response and those who do respond tend to be the most educated and articulate groups in society.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the response in relation to broader, strategic policy issues tends to be less than that on specific matters identifiable by people as having concrete implications for their lives. Therefore, the scope of participation is, in effect, limited and focussed more on specific issues of who gains and who loses due to the implementation of road schemes. Broader policy issues are subjected to less effective scrutiny and are correspondingly resolved more in terms of the less visible levels of the exercise of power indicated above. In this way the

ideological theme of the authority of representative democracy can be seen as serving to reduce effective criticism and scrutiny of the forms in which power is exercised in roads decision making thus legitimising the existing structure of such political power.

The second factor is the role of professionals in formal exercises of participation and consultation. Thus, in exercises such as sample surveys of local opinion, and public consultation exercises in relation to statutory development plans and alternative routes for specific road schemes, local authority officials play an important role in terms of the design of the form and scope of consultation, the interpretation of views and opinions received, and the recommendation to members of action which should be taken in response to the views expressed. In this way the influence of local groups and interests is 'filtered' through a framework of professional perceptions, assumptions and values - through a 'paradigm' which expresses professional commitments and conditions professional judgements. This 'processing' of local opinion can be seen as serving further to protect from radical challenge existing structures of power and the outcomes which they produce.

This analysis raises a question over the potential contribution to 'rational' decision making of procedures of scheme appraisal which are used in the context of public consultation exercises to provide a basis for resolving disputes over the distribution of gains and losses due to scheme impacts. Our analysis has attempted to set such procedures in the context of the broader decision making process and has emphasised the relatively limited role of this dimension of decision making when viewed in a wider perspective. As regards the specific issue of the role and contribution of the Framework approach, the fundamental question which arises is to what extent it represents a useful procedural means to increased rationality in decision making or more a technical facade to legitimise the existing structure of influence of dominant interests in decision making.

7. Conclusion: On the Scope for 'Rational' Decision Making

In many respects decision making in the transport sector can be characterised as highly 'rational' and 'technocratic'. In particular, the process followed in planning new roads at national and local levels conforms in general to the form prescribed by the rational model starting with the problem definition, moving through the development and evaluation of options to the selection and implementation of the preferred scheme. Analytical techniques are extensively used in traffic analysis and forecasting and in scheme appraisal. Correspondingly, professionals and experts play an important role in various stages of the decision making process.

However, our analysis suggests that such a technocratic view rests on a narrow and partial interpretation of decision making. Thus, such an interpretation focuses on the process of planning specific road schemes, taking as given the broader context of objectives and policy formulation and resource allocation which provides the parameters for decision making on specific schemes. We have seen that decision making at this broader level is dominated by ideological and political influences which serve to condition the process of planning individual schemes. Moreover, even at this latter level the rationalist ideal of comprehensiveness is never feasible; selectivity requires the exercise of judgement and judgement brings with it ideological and political influences. This is perhaps most apparent in the definition of a transport 'problem' and the perception of new road construction as the required solution.

The technocratic interpretation can also be seen as engendered by an empiricist approach which generalises from readily-observable aspects of the decision making process. Such an approach will tend to over-emphasise the role of technical and analytical components of the process, commonly well-documented by professionals, and focus on case studies of specific road schemes, to the relative neglect of broader political and institutional aspects. Moreover, analysis of the latter will tend to focus on more observable 'overt' influences to the relative neglect of 'covert' and 'latent' dimensions to the exercise of political power. The influence of ideological commitments and of 'insider' interest groups are likely to be particularly under-stated in such an approach.

Our analysis suggests that these ideological and political influences are of considerable importance in roads decision making in two main respects. The first is in the establishment of central government objectives, policies and resource allocations for roads which are fundamental to the determination of the scale for provision of roads. Moreover, in the process of planning national roads, these governmental commitments are not open to scrutiny and challenge in the development of individual schemes on the grounds that they are products of the 'democratic decision of Parliament'. We have seen that this, in

itself represents an important ideological consideration in the decision making process.

Ideological and political influences can also be seen as playing an important role in the development of the 'control framework' through which central government attempts to ensure that decision making by local authorities produces outcomes consistent with the government's own objectives, policies and priorities. This framework is defined primarily in terms of legislative measures and statutory instruments and it is clear that its development by the present Government over the past decade has been influenced primarily by ideological commitments and the particular interest promoted by the Government. We have seen that this 'control framework' has a considerable influence on roads decision making by local authorities, an influence, moreover, which is increasing.

Therefore, in our view, road decision making should be seen a subject to a wide range of influences deriving from ideological commitments, political pressure and technical analysis. Attempts to characterise decision making in terms of the theoretical models of 'rationalism' or 'incrementalism' do not seem to be particularly helpful. Perspectives on the nature and balance of these influences will vary according to the level and scope of analysis - at the level of specific schemes or broader policies; of national or local government.

Perspectives on the role of techniques of analysis and appraisal will vary, therefore, according to how the decision making process is defined and conceptualised. From our point of view, their role in current roads decision making can be seen as serving two main purposes. First, they provide a basis for resource allocation to roads which is more effective in achieving the Government's objectives and priorities. Second, they provide a basis for consideration of the specific impacts of schemes on affected groups and interests with a view to deriving a route and design which achieves a balance of gains and losses which can be deemed 'appropriate', and which is capable of implementation. The overriding purpose is the achievement of more efficient implementation of road building as the means to ideologically - and politically - determined ends which are given to, and beyond scrutiny in, the process of planning specific road schemes. The role of 'technique' should therefore be seen in the context of ideological and political influences on objectives, policies and the framework of central government control over local authorities. From this perspective, the technocratic view of rational decision making can be seen as serving to conceal the influence of ideological commitments, values and interests behind a 'rationalistic' facade; as promoting acceptance of decisions conditioned by these influences by focusing on the role of 'rational' techniques; as serving the ideological purpose of legitimising the existing structure of power.

Nevertheless, there is widespread support for the view that increased 'rationality' in decision making is desirable. This would imply a greater role for 'rational' techniques of analysis

and appraisal to improve the effectiveness of decision making. This view can be seen as resting on a set of assumptions embodied in the dominant ideology. In particular, it assumes that decision making is about the choice of the best means to achieve given ends and that the process of choice will be the more rational for the application of scientifically-based analytical techniques. Elected representatives will therefore be better informed by the analysis undertaken by impartial experts and able to make more rational decisions in response to pressures exercised by the plurality of groups in society based on an assessment of the broad public interest.

To the extent that these assumptions are not valid the scope for increased 'rationality' in decision making will be limited. Our analysis has indicated the fundamental problems with this view. First, the consideration of alternative means cannot be separated radically from the ends to which they relate; decision making should not be seen purely as a technical exercise of planning road schemes but rather as a broader process conditioned throughout by ideological and political influences. The problems experienced during the 1970's with opposition and disruption of roads public inquiries can be seen as a result of the inappropriate application of this formal means-ends rationality in the decision making process. Second, inequalities in power and influence between different groups and interests in society and imperfections in structures of democratic accountability undermine the model role of elected representatives and democratic institutions in the rationalist design.

Based upon this analysis we would argue, then, that the political and institutional dimensions of the decision making process set the context for 'improvements' which can be achieved through development in analytical techniques and procedures. Developments motivated by the ideals of the rational model are unlikely to secure practical benefits unless they are tailored carefully to 'mesh' with political and institutional realities. This is certainly the lesson to be derived, for example, from attempts to introduce techniques of corporate planning into central and local government over the past twenty years or so. The wide variety of approaches developed by local authorities to analysis and appraisal in roads decision making suggests that their development has proceeded according to local perceptions of appropriateness in relation to the political and institutional context. This analysis brings into question the notion of standardised techniques to improve the rationality of local authority decision making on roads.

We would conclude that moves towards such standardisation are best understood in the context of increasing central government control over local authorities - as part of a broader programme of central government which is reducing the influence over decision making of local political considerations. The logic of this increased central control can be related to the governments' concern to reduce the role of the state in the allocation resources in line with its commitments to expanding the scope of the market and the private sector. Where the state does retain

a residual role, there is then a need to ensure that decisions are as consistent as possible with the market philosophy and this is achieved through controls which relate decisions to governmental objectives. We have seen that these objectives embody 'market' concerns of efficiency and the promotion of economic growth. In this way, the government can be seen as seeking to impose a 'pseudo-market' framework on state decision making. Increased control over local authority decision making is crucial to this project in order to overcome a long tradition of planning services to meet local need based on collective provision to meet social objectives. In this scheme of things increased standardisation of techniques and procedures to 'aid' decision making relates to increased central government control over the resources available to authorities for the provision of services and facilities which, in turn, implies a reduction in local political autonomy and control.

Thus, we have seen that, since the reform of the TSG system in 1985/86, the Government has gained greater effective control over local authorities roads decision making such that the size of authorities' roads programmes is now primarily determined by DTp decisions on TSG and capital spending cover. This increased role for central government has been reflected in moves to develop and standardise appraisal procedures around the Framework approach in order to provide the DTp with a better indication of the extent to which road schemes achieve the government's objectives. Moves to develop standardised appraisal procedures for smaller non-TSG schemes indicate an extension of central government control over resource allocation to ensure greater conformity with the government's objectives, with a concomitant erosion of local political discretion.

In the present political context, then, the focus, in terms of developing technical aspects of the roads decision-making process, is on enhancing the capacity to determine value for money in relation to the government's objectives. This will increase the government's ability to ensure the allocation of state-controlled resources in accordance with the 'pseudo-market' framework to further its ideological and political programme. Given the commitment to the use of the Framework approach to scheme appraisal there is likely to be an increasing trend towards quantification of all impacts in order to enable more 'precise' measures of value for money to be obtained. This would promote the incorporation, in particular, of environmental impacts of road schemes into the calculus of market exchange values.

This trend towards 'pseudo-market' principles in roads investment appraisal is consistent with the government's measures to move responsibility for the provision of transport services and facilities from state institutions into the 'market place'. Thus, the government has recently announced its intention to legislate to amend the 1980 Highways Act to allow the private sector to provide new roads financed by tolls.¹⁰⁹ The government sees the 'user pays' principle as "...essential if we are to move the provision of roads nearer the market place."¹¹⁰ Since the

deregulation of local bus services in 1985/86 the majority of urban bus services (outside London) have been provided on a commercial basis. New criteria developed by the government for grant support to major local public transport investment projects under Section 56 of the 1968 Transport Act require that such projects should be financed as much as possible from user charges supplemented by private sector development gains. Grant support will relate only to external benefits, in particular congestion relief.¹¹¹ Consequently, appraisal of such projects is dominated by the determination of value for money in purely financial terms and it is clear that the case for grant support will increasingly require external benefits to be quantified into market exchange values.

This latter development has most relevance to the financing of urban light rapid transit (LRT) systems which are currently under investigation in many large urban areas.¹¹² The requirement for such schemes to finance user benefits from fares is consistent with the Government's move towards privately-financed toll roads; however, whereas all LRT schemes will be subject to this discipline, most road schemes will continue to be provided from public expenditure with the case for provision dominated by the calculation of user benefits. The 'pseudo-market' framework for roads provides for continuing substantial public expenditure for new trunk road construction, as indicated by the Government's plans to spend some 40% more on new construction over the next 3 years (1991/92) than over the previous 3 year period.¹¹³ The discrepancy in the approach to financing road and public transport provision can be interpreted in terms of the government's preceptions of the key role of roads in supporting economic growth - in underwriting the process of private capital accumulation; the ideological commitment to individual freedom and choice; and the influence of powerful interests behind road construction.

It would appear, then, that roads provision is likely to remain primarily a public sector responsibility for the foreseeable future, notwithstanding an increasing role for the private sector. Concern with value for money and opportunity costs is likely to increase in a context of restrained total public expenditure and continuing erosion of the scope of public provision as activities are transferred into the private sector. Therefore, there will probably be continuing pressure for roads appraisal techniques to provide improved measures of value for money which will permit the government, primarily via the Treasury, to pursue its interpretation of the most effective allocation of resources. As argued above, given the government's objectives and priorities, the emphasis is likely to be placed increasingly on economic benefits and on the quantification of scheme impacts to facilitate their 'valuation' within the 'pseudo-market' framework.

However, there is an important second dimension to the role of roads appraisal procedures which we highlighted in our discussion the Leitch Framework approach in Section 5 above. This is their role in identifying the impact of schemes on different groups and

in providing a basis for consultation and discussion on scheme options to facilitate compromise and agreement. This dimension is also likely to become increasingly important in the context of an expanded road-building programme with the Government concerned to achieve rapid progress in implementation. In view of the opposition and consequent delays to public inquiries engendered by the expanded road-building programme of the early 1970's, the concerns which promoted the review of highway inquiries procedures and the review of appraisal techniques by the Leitch Committee once again become particularly apposite. To what extent will the reforms implemented following these reviews help to defuse potential opposition and conflict and speed up the planning process? To what extent will they enhance the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of affected groups and secure their consent in the outcomes?

On the basis of our analysis we conclude that these reforms have not addressed the fundamental issue of the influence of dominant ideological themes, values and interests on decision making and have not affected the broad structure of a process which preserves central control over decision making and limits the scope for influence of alternative values and interests. They concern primarily the approach to considering the specific local gains and losses due to alternative route alignments, with issues of Government objectives, policies and priorities being given to these considerations and beyond effective critical scrutiny. We concluded that opposition to road schemes will be difficult to defuse in the discussion of specific scheme impacts if such opposition is generated to any significant degree by conflicts of basic values and, in particular, by conflict with the dominant values expressed in Government objectives and policy which are given to such discussion.

Looking specifically at the Framework approach, if it is to achieve the objectives set out for it by the Leitch Committee two conditions would appear to be required: first, consent by affected groups in the objectives and policies which underpin proposals for specific road schemes; and, second, a willingness by all groups concerned to compromise and agree on the distribution of gains and losses due to scheme impacts. As regards the first condition, consent may derive either from agreement with such objectives and policies, or, in the case of disagreement, from a perception of the legitimacy of the process by which they are produced. A potential problem here, which we have discussed, is the limited ability of Parliamentary institutions to hold the Government accountable to interests other than those promoted by the Government itself. This can undermine the perceived legitimacy of Government policy in the eyes of those who do not subscribe to the dominant ideology and whose opposition to road schemes derives, at least in part, from value considerations.

Even if consent at the level of values and policy is forthcoming problems are likely to arise with the second condition. In highlighting the distribution of gains and losses between various affected groups the Framework approach can be seen as increasing

the potential for conflict and disagreements whilst providing no new grounds for resolving them. Thus, provision for financial compensation of losses is limited under the terms of the 1973 Land Compensation Act to adverse impacts on land and property.¹¹⁴ Many adverse impacts of road schemes remain uncompensated and, indeed, some people experiencing them would argue that they are incapable of being compensated in financial terms. The achievement of a consensus on the preferred form of a road scheme then depends on the preparedness of those experiencing the adverse impacts to trade them off against the benefits of the scheme whatever the distribution of these might be.

If the above conditions are not met then a consensus decision, acceptable to all affected groups, will not be possible and the decision made by the Secretary of State will impose costs on some groups who bear them unwillingly. The danger is that the Framework approach merely serves to give the appearance that the interests of all affected groups are being taken into account but has no real impact in terms of promoting consensual decision making. In this sense it would provide a rational facade which serves to conceal and legitimise the real exercise of power. It would appear that in order for the Framework approach to have a real impact on decision making certain important political and institutional reforms would be required.

The fundamental point is that the 'philosophy' underlying the Framework approach does not match with the political and institutional context in which it is applied. This 'philosophy' embodies assumptions of an open and participatory style of decision making in which all groups are encouraged to take part and can have equal influence. There is an implicit model of pluralist democracy promoting 'interactive participation' with people actively sharing in the policy-making process.¹¹⁵ We have seen, however, that roads decision making in practice is characterised by a culture of limited participation, underpinned by dominant ideological themes which emphasises the authority of elected representatives and the institutions of representative democracy, and of professionals and experts with command of 'facts' and 'scientific' procedures. It is also characterised by a high degree of control by state institutions and the elites which control them and, as Boaden at al argue "...elite attitudes tend to favour models of participation which strictly limit the role of the public."¹¹⁶

It is indeed a fatal contradiction in the Leitch Committee's arguments that they saw the Framework approach as promoting both a 'managerial' model of improved central control and a 'participatory' model of improved public involvement in decision making.¹¹⁷ We have discussed above the trend towards increasing emphasis on assessing the value for money of road schemes within a 'pseudo-market' framework which is consistent with the 'managerial' model. However, for the Framework approach to play the role effectively which is implied by the 'participatory' model would require some radical changes in ideological, political and institutional terms designed to open up the decision making process to equal influence of all individuals and

groups promoting full democratic discussion at all stages in the process. This would have major implications for the structure and exercise of power in society and for its institutional basis. It would imply, in particular, a decentralisation of decision making more to the local level where community participation can best be promoted.

In the present context in the absence of such reforms, the best prospects for progress through the use of the Framework approach in assessing the distribution of scheme impacts would appear to exist in local authorities where decision making on road schemes is more open to local communities. However, we have noted the recent trend towards increasing central government influence on authorities' decision making in relation to major road schemes through arrangements for sanctioning capital spending cover. Nevertheless, the implementation of a system for decision support based on the Framework approach could provide a means to improve public participation in decisions on local road schemes, in the context of moves currently underway in many local authorities to open up decision making to the public in the 'public service orientation.'¹¹⁸ There is some debate as to whether such moves are merely cosmetic or whether they represent an institutional change which will genuinely improve local participation in decision making.¹¹⁹ To the extent that the latter is the case effective local participation in roads decision making could be improved from the earliest stages in which local communities could play a more active role in defining the nature of local transport problems and of possible approaches to solving them. Systems for decision support which build on and promote such institutional change can serve to enhance participatory decision making. However, in the absence of institutional reform there is real danger that such systems will merely give an appearance of enhanced participation whilst refining further the technocratic facade which conceals the real influences on decision making and serves to legitimise the decision making process permitting greater 'efficiency' in the implementation of Government policy.

Notes

1. Dror (1971) p1
2. Vickers (1965) p205
3. Dept of Transport (1977), (1986A); an efficiency scrutiny of the DTP's activities in relation to local authorities' capital expenditure on roads has recently recommended the application of the Framework approach to major local road schemes as well as trunk schemes; Dept of Transport (1988A)
4. Beesley and Kettle (1979) p515; Dept of Transport (1986A) para 4.18
5. O'Riordan and Sewell (1981) p4
6. See Gwilliam and Mackie (1975) Chapter 2; for more general discussion see Legrand and Robinson (1984) and Gordon (1982)
7. Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) Chapter 3
8. Convenient summaries of this dispute can be found in Hogwood and Gunn (1984), Ham and Hill (1984), McGrew and Wilson (1982) and Rhodes (1979); see also Leach (1982)
9. Rhodes (1979) p29
10. Lindblom (1982) p136
11. See references at note 8
12. *ibid*
13. Swann (1988) Ch 8; Holland (1980) p10-11
14. Holland (1980) p126-8; Dunleavy and Duncan (1989) p27
15. Dept of Transport (1988B) p2-3; the Scottish and Welsh offices respectively have these responsibilities in Scotland and Wales
16. *ibid*
17. Likierman (1988) p50-9
18. This view is based on Martlew (1983)
19. Sanderson (1988)
20. Cotgrove (1982) p101-2
21. *ibid* p27-32
22. *ibid* p27
23. See for example, Dept of Transport (1988A) para 1.2.3: "Both in decisions on individual schemes and when overall spending levels need to be determined, value judgements are important. These judgements are for elected politicians to make in the light of the various demands placed on them by their electorates."
24. Dunleavy and Duncan (1989) p9, 15
25. See, for example, Habermas (1971), Fay (1975)
26. Self (1975)
27. *ibid*, especially Chapter 7
28. Sandbach (1980) p77
29. *ibid*; Adams (1981) Chapter 11
30. Laffin (1986)
31. Plowden Committee (1961); see also Colvin (1985) Chapter 4
32. Colvin *op cit* p78-82
33. cf. Self (1975) p169
34. Lukes (1974)
35. *ibid*. p24. Lukes' view is mirrored in Offe's (1976) argument that the political stability of capitalist society is protected through the institutional processing and exclusion of needs which, if articulated, would pose a threat to

- stability
36. These themes are reflected in the Governments' transport objectives which place particular emphasis on consumer choice, deregulation, efficiency and promoting economic growth through reduced transport costs: see Dept of Transport (1988B)
 37. Wistrich (1983): Hamer (1987)
 38. Wistrich op cit Chapter 6; Hamer op cit
 39. This was the Government's position on highways inquiries in the review conducted in the late 1970s: see Departments of Transport and Environment (1978) paras 14-16
 40. Richardson and Jordan (1979); Kavanagh (1985) p316-18; Collingridge and Reeve (1986)
 41. Dept of Transport (1988B) para 1
 42. *ibid.* para 13; H.M. Treasury (1989) para 40;
 43. Dept of Transport (1987) para 2.5
 44. Dept of Transport (1989B)
 45. Statement to the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for Transport 18/05/89: see Local Transport Today No4, 1989
 46. Kavanagh (1985) Chapter 11; Greenwood and Wilson (1984) Chapter 13
 47. Richardson and Jordan (1979)
 48. Greenwood and Wilson (1984) p236
 49. House of Commons (1988); see, in particular, paras 17-18
 50. Dept of Transport (1987) para 1.2
 51. Quoted in Likierman (1988) p66
 52. Nigel Lawson quoted *ibid.* p69
 53. See Dept of Transport (1986A) Chapter 3
 54. Local Transport Today No4 (1989)
 55. It would appear that in practice very few schemes do not proceed once they are included in the programme. The 1985 Roads White Paper added 51 schemes to the programme; between 1985 and 1987 55 schemes were completed; the 1987 White Paper added 82 schemes to the programme and announced that four schemes had been withdrawn; see Dept of Transport (1987) para 2-6
 56. Dept of Transport (1986A) Chapter 4; the National Audit Office (1985) para 2.5 found that "...schemes were initially identified as possible solutions to particular problems, and... procedures were such that economic assessments of schemes were not normally carried out before they were included in the programme."
 57. Dept of Transport (1986A) para 4.10-4.11
 58. Dept of Transport (1986B), (1989)
 59. Dept of Transport (1986A) para 3.8
 60. Dept of Transport and Environment (1978) paras 14-16
 61. See discussion above in Section 4; Adams (1981), Self (1975)
 62. Notable examples of disruption were at the Epping Forest (M16), Winchester (M3), Shipley (A650) and Archway (A1) Inquiries at which John Tyme played a prominent role
 63. op cit note 60, para 4
 64. Beesley and Kettle (1979)
 65. op cit note 60 paras 23-60
 66. *ibid.*; White Papers on national roads policies and programme are now produced on a biennial basis

67. Dept of Transport (1977) para 20.6
68. *ibid.* para 20.8
69. *ibid.* para 20.41
70. *ibid.* para 20.6, 20.42-20.43: see also Beesley and Kettle (1979) p515-6
71. Dept of Transport (1979) para 2.8
72. National Audit Office (1985)
73. Dept of Transport (1986A) Chapter 3
74. Stoker (1988) Chapter 6; Loughlin (1986); Sanderson (1989)
75. Sanderson (1989); Travers (1986)
76. Dept of Environment (1988) outlines these changes which are also summarised in terms of their implications for transport in Dept of Transport (1989A) paras 3-9
77. Sanderson (1988B)
78. H.M. Treasury (1989) Table 8.1
79. Sanderson (1989)
80. See Sanderson (1988B) and Dept of Transport (1988A)
81. See Sanderson (1988A) and (1988B)
82. Dept of Transport (1988A) para 1.4.13
83. Hampton (1987) Chapter 5
84. Sanderson (1988B) Section 5.1
85. Dept of Transport (1988A) para 3.1.4
86. Dept of Transport (1981)
87. Dept of Transport (1989A) Annex B
88. Dept of Transport (1988A)
89. *ibid.* p17-29
90. *ibid.* para 2.9.1
91. *ibid.* para 3.1.8
92. Dept of Transport (1989A) Annex B para 4
93. Dept of Transport (1988A) para 5.4.4
94. *ibid.* para 5.4.3
95. *ibid.* para 5.2.3
96. *ibid.* para 5.4.3
97. Simon et al (1988) p16
98. *ibid.*
99. *ibid.*
100. Dept of Transport (1988A) Section 5
101. *ibid.* para 5.4.4
102. Dept of Transport (1986A) Section 3
103. *ibid.* para 3.39; Colvin (1985) Chapter 4
104. See Jones and Stewart (1983) p5-6
105. Sanderson (1989)
106. Dept of Transport (1988A) Section 5
107. Dept of Transport (1986A) para 3.15
108. Boaden et al (1982) p178-9
109. Dept of Transport (1989C)
110. Secretary of State for Transport quoted in 'Local Transport Today', No3, 1989
111. Dept of Transport (1988C)
112. LRT schemes are under development or investigation in Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Nottingham, Bristol, Reading
113. H.M. Treasury (1989) Chapter 8 para 46
114. This argument is developed by Beesley and Kettle (1979) p522
115. Boaden et al (1982) p168-9
116. *ibid.* p176

117. We agree with Beesley and Kettle (1979) in this argument
118. Stewart (1988), Stoker (1988) Chapter 9
119. Stoker op cit

References

- Adams J (1981) Transport Planning: Vision and Practice, Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Beesley M E and Kettle P B (1989) 'The Leitch Committees' Recommendations and the Management of the Road Programme,' Regional Studies, Vol 13 p513-29
- Boaden N et al (1982) Public Participation in Local Services, Longman
- Collingridge D and Reeve C (1986) Science Speaks to Power: The Role of Experts in Policy Making, Frances Pinter
- Colvin P (1985) The Economic Ideal in British Government: Calculating Costs and Benefits in the 1970s, Manchester University Press
- Cotgrove S (1982) Catastrophe or Cornucopia: The Environment, Politics and the Future, Wiley
- Department of the Environment (1988) Capital Expenditure and Finance: A Consultation Paper, DOE, London
- Department of Transport (1977) Report of the Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (Leitch Committee), H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1979) Trunk Road Proposals: A Comprehensive Framework for Appraisal, Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment, H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1981) COBA 9 Manual, DTp, London
- Department of Transport (1986A) Urban Road Appraisal, Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment, H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1986B) The Government's Response to the SACTRA Report on Urban Road Appraisal, H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1987) Policy for Roads in England: 1987, Cm125, H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1988A) Local Roads Capital Expenditure: An Efficiency Scrutiny, DTp.
- Department of Transport (1988B) Annual Review of the Government's Expenditure Plans for Transport 1988-89 to 1990-91, memorandum to House of Commons (1988) op cit
- Department of Transport (1988C) Light Rail Projects: Financial and Economic Appraisal. DTp Note
- Department of Transport (1989A) Transport Policies and Programme

Submissions for 1990/91, Circular 1/89, DTp

- Department of Transport (1989B) Roads for Prosperity, CM693, H.M.S.O.
- Department of Transport (1989C) New Roads by New Means: Bringing in Private Finance - A Consultation Paper, CM698, H.M.S.O.
- Departments of Transport and Environment (1978) Report on the Review of Highway Inquiry Procedures, Cmnd 7133, H.M.S.O.
- Dror Y (1971) Design for Policy Sciences, Elsevier
- Dunleavy P and Duncan K (1989) Understanding the Politics of Transport, Paper presented to ESRC Seminar on Policy-Making Processes in Transport, University College, London 3rd March 1989
- Dunleavy P and O'Leary B (1987) Theories of the State: The Politics of Liberal Democracy, Macmillan
- Fay B (1975) Social Theory and Political Practice, Allen and Unwin
- Gordon A (1982) Economics and Social Policy, Martin Robertson
- Greenwood J and Wilson D (1984) Public Administration in Britain Unwin Hyman
- Gwilliam K and Mackie P J (1975) Economics and Transport Policy, Allen and Unwin
- Habermas J (1971) Toward a Rational Society, Heinemann
- Ham C and Hill M (1984) The Policy Process in the Modern Capitalist State, Wheatsheaf Books
- Hamer M (1987) Wheels within Wheels: A Study of the Road Lobby, Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Hampton W (1987) Local Government and Urban Politics, Longman
- Hogwood B W and Gunn L A (1984) Policy Analysis for the Real World, Oxford University Press
- Holland S (1980) Uncommon Market: Capital, Class and Power in the European Community, Macmillan
- House of Commons (1988) The Government's Expenditure Plans for Transport 1988-89 to 1990-91, Second Report of the Transport Committee, HC442, H.M.S.O.
- H.M. Treasury (1989) The Government's Expenditure Plans 1989-90 to 1991-92, Chapter 8 Department of Transport, CM608, H.M.S.O.

- Jones G and Stewart J (1983) *The Case for Local Government, Local Government Briefings 1*, Allen and Unwin
- Kavanagh D (1985) *British Politics: Continuities and Change*, Oxford University Press
- Laffin M (1986) *Professionalism and Policy: The Role of the Professions in the Central-Local Government Relationship*, Gower
- Leach S (1982) In Defence of the Rational Model in S Leach and J Stewart ed *Approaches in Public Policy*, Allen and Unwin
- Legrand J and Robinson R (1984) *The Economics of Social Problems: The Market versus the State*, Macmillan
- Levin P H (1979) Highway Inquiries: A Study in Governmental Responsiveness, Public Administration Vol 57 no 1 p21-49
- Lickierman A (1988) *Public Expenditure: The Public Spending Process*, Penguin Books
- Lindblom C (1982) 'Still Muddling, Not Yet Through' in McGrew and Wilson op cit p125-38
- Loughlin M (1986) 'Constitutional Arguments and Constitutional Values in the Debate over Central-Local Government Relations' in M Goldsmith ED *New Research in Central-Local Relations*, Gower
- Lukes S (1974) *Power: A Radical View*, Macmillan
- Martlew C (1983) *The State and Local Government Finance*, Public Administration, vol 61 no2, p127-47
- McGrew A G and Wilson M J (1982) *Decision Making: Approaches and Analysis*, Manchester University Press
- National Audit Office (1985) *Department of Transport: Expenditure on Motorways and Trunk Roads*, H.M.S.O.
- Offe C (1976) 'Political Authority and Class Structures' in P Connerton ED *Critical Sociology*, Penguin Books p388-421
- O'Riordan T and Sewell W (1981) *Project Appraisal and Policy Review*, Wiley and Sons
- Plowden Committee (1961) *The Control of Public Expenditure*, Cmnd 1432, H.M.S.O.
- Rhodes R.A.W. (1979) *Public Administration and Policy Analysis: Recent Developments in Britain and America*, Saxon House
- Richardson J J and Jordan A G (1979) *Governing under Pressure*, Martin Robertson

- Sandbach F (1980) Environment, Ideology and Policy, Basil Blackwell
- Sanderson I (1988A) The Impact of Central Government Policies on Local Authorities' Transport Expenditure and Provision: 2 Analysis of Trends in Local Transport Expenditure since 1979 Working Paper 261, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds
- Sanderson I (1988B) The Impact of Central Government Policies on Local Authorities' Transport Expenditure and Provision: 3 Roads Capital Expenditure and Transport Supplementary Grant since 1985/86. Working Paper 268, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds
- Sanderson I (1989) The Impact of Central Government Policies on Local Authorities' Transport Expenditure and Provision since 1979: Summary Report, Working Paper 271, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds
- Self P (1975) Econocrats and the Policy Process: The Politics and Philosophy of Cost-Benefit Analysis, Macmillan
- Simon D et al (1988) Priority Assessment Techniques for British Local Authority Highway Schemes, Transportation Research Record No 1156 p10-17, TRB
- Stewart J (1988) Understanding the Management of Local Government, Longman
- Stoker G (1988) The Politics of Local Government, Macmillan
- Swann D (1988) The Economics of the Common Market, Penguin Books
- Travers A (1986) The Politics of Local Government Finance, Allen and Unwin
- Vickers Sir G (1965) The Art of Judgement: A Study of Policy Making, Methuen
- Wistrich E (1983) The Politics of Transport, Longman