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Title: Challenges for future city growth – the case of London

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ABSTRACT

The population of London was 8.2 million in 2011 and is currently growing by about 100,000 per year. It is forecast to go up to 9.2 million by 2021 and 9.8 million by 2031. The Mayor's London Plan recognises this growth and also anticipates that an additional 750,000 jobs will be created in London by 2031. This will result in additional passenger and freight transport demand. The growth of London in the medium- to long-term, as set out in the London Plan, will lead to an increase in freight movement to construct, supply and service London's economy in a sustainable way.

The success of London is dependent on the efficient movement of goods and services as well as people. Road is by far the dominant mode for goods transport in London in terms of the weight of goods lifted. The next most important mode is Port of London traffic on the river Thames within London, followed by rail and air. Currently Light goods vehicles (LGVs) and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) accounted for 13 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of all vehicle kilometres travelled on London's roads in 2012. Goods vehicles are second only in scale to car traffic in London and TfL estimates indicate that LGVs and HGVs were responsible for 10 per cent and 13 per cent of road transport CO₂ emissions in London in 2010.

TfL has implemented several projects to improve the efficiency, safety and environmental impacts of road freight transport across London including the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS), Delivery Servicing Plans (DSPs), Construction Logistics Plans (CLPs), and the Low Emission Zone. However, it is clear that these initiatives will not be sufficient to deal with the complex challenges posed by the anticipated growth London. The paper will discuss the range of future strategies that can be considered and will illustrate how important these strategies could be in moderating the negative implications of freight transport growth over the next 15 years. In order to do this the paper will build on research being carried out as part of the VREF CoE-SUFS Centre¹ in which we have worked with partners to examine a range of freight supply and demand strategies to consider their impact on urban freight transport activity. A particular focus will be on the role of the public and private stakeholders and the actions each group can take to address the potentially negative consequences of this growth in demand for freight.

¹ CoE-SUFS is one of two centres of excellence in urban freight funded by the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations. CoE-SUFS contains 22 core and associate research partners in 16 countries (covering North America, central and south America, Africa, Asia, the Middle and Far East, Australasia, and the EU).