

HIT THE SUPERINFORMATION HIGHWAY... NOT THE ROAD!

Richie Fraser
Faber Maunsell

1. Introduction

In March 2007, Aberdeenshire Council published their Local Transport Strategy (LTS), which adopts travel behaviour change as its central theme in response to the tough choices and uncomfortable realities that we face today, most notably the transport sector's ever increasing contribution to carbon dioxide emissions, which is fuelling global climate change. In response to these concerns, there is growing awareness within the transport industry of the need to adopt more sustainable travel behaviours and to "think global, act local". Aberdeenshire Council is constantly looking for new ways to reduce traffic growth and hope that the development of two innovative offices in Aberdeenshire can go some way to support this.

As part of the European Interreg IIIB SustAccess project (www.sustaccess.org), Aberdeenshire Council have set up two "IT Hot Stop" offices; one located in an existing business centre in Peterhead and the other set within the Huntly Learning Centre. These 'satellite offices', which were launched in September 2006, have been set up to provide local residents, businesses and community groups with free access to meeting areas equipped with the latest Information and Communications Technology (ICT), including PCs for hot-desk working, Wi-Fi access, and video-conferencing meeting rooms.

The IT Hot Stops are part of a pilot initiative to investigate how ICT can reduce business mileage and the need to travel for meetings, but at the same time deliver wider community benefits. The following article aims to:

- provide some historical context to the development of the IT Hot Stops;
- explain the methodology used to identify the most suitable pilot sites;
- outline the facilities provided at the IT Hot Stops, with a brief summary of costs;
- explain how the offices have been monitored;
- discuss the marketing activities that have been undertaken to promote the IT Hot Stops;
- critically evaluate the IT Hot Stop concept, exploring the benefits and limitations of the offices;
- provide some early results from the IT Hot Stops;
- highlight some early lessons learned in establishing the facilities; and
- present some options for the future development of the IT Hot Stops.

2. Context

In October 2004, Aberdeenshire Council, along with 9 other partners from across Europe, joined the European Union sponsored 'SustAccess' Project. SustAccess is a three year project with the overall aim "to improve the

accessibility between rural areas and gateway settlements around the North Sea, improving integration and access to services, creating functional markets for business, labour and education by delivering and promoting sustainable transport systems”.

Through the SustAccess project, which match funds the contribution of the partner regions, Aberdeenshire Council (with additional support from Nestrans) have progressed a number of projects. Studies have included a review into park and ride across the region (DHC and Aberdeen University 2006), a Transport Problems and Solutions Study (Colin Buchanan and Partners Ltd 2005), which has fed into the LTS development process, and a freight study examining options to increase the market share of rail freight in the North East (Faber Maunsell 2007). However, it has been through the progression of the business travel reduction project (the IT Hot Stops) that Aberdeenshire Council has most actively sought to deliver the SustAccess project aims.

To initiate the business travel reduction project, Faber Maunsell were commissioned in February 2005 to identify “two pilot ‘business centre’ sites” within Aberdeenshire to be trialed with the goal of improving the accessibility of business individuals and the wider community in rural areas to ICT. The remit continued, “The centres will allow an alternative to travelling to meetings through the use of telephone, video and web conferencing, and will therefore primarily target members of the business community”. However, it is recognised that these centres could play a key role in reducing rural exclusion in the wider community and contribute to increased accessibility of the rural areas served. For this reason, the pilot sites for the centres were investigated with a view to the likely benefits that could be experienced by local members of the community in addition to members of the rural business community.

3. Site Identification Process

Faber Maunsell adopted a STAG appraisal (Scottish Executive 2003) to identify the most suitable pilot sites for the remote offices. This approach included a process of consultation, objective development, option generation and sifting, site audits (including an IT appraisal which examined the networking capabilities of the local rural areas) and appraisal in accordance with STAG. During the STAG appraisal, each of the potential locations were assessed against the scheme objectives, implementability criteria, and the Government’s objectives for Transport. The scheme objectives developed for the project were as follows:

1. To reduce the need to travel for business activities such as meetings, resulting in reduced business mileage;
2. To provide added facilities for the wider community, which will improve the social accessibility of rural areas;
3. To improve the accessibility of communities in rural Aberdeenshire to Information and Communications Technology (ICT);
4. To increase linked trips in the local communities served by the business centres;

5. To identify those business centre sites that offer the greatest potential to become economically self-sustaining; and
6. To increase awareness of ICT in the local communities served.

While the facilities were intended for use by the general public, a process of accessibility planning involving plotting the postcode data of Council employees was conducted as a final check on the suitability of potential sites.

The results of this work led to the selection of the Burnside Business Centre in Peterhead and the Huntly Learning Centre in Huntly as the most suitable sites for piloting the facilities. Both sites are located on commuter trunk roads to Aberdeen and are home to resident populations which regularly commute to Aberdeen for work purposes. Peterhead, for example, is located on the A90, 28 miles north of Aberdeen and has a population of 18,000, of which it is estimated that 15% commute to Aberdeen during the working week (Aberdeenshire Council Statistics 2004/05). Huntly has a population of 4,000 and surveys suggest that around 13% of the town's residents make the daily 40 mile commute to Aberdeen along the A96 (Aberdeenshire Council Statistics 2004/05).

Finally, it should be highlighted that the sites were selected on the basis that they would provide a useful comparison. For instance, the Burnside Business Centre is based within an existing business centre and is more business-orientated being aimed at business users. In contrast, being based in a Learning Centre makes the Huntly site more community-orientated and attractive to community groups and members of the public. Therefore, it was believed that by selecting the sites in Peterhead and Huntly, the opportunity to learn lessons from this pilot initiative would be maximized.

4. The IT Hot Stops

Once the preferred sites had been identified, work was undertaken to secure the lease agreements and to procure the ICT equipment. At the Peterhead site, a single office was leased in the Burnside Business Centre, which is serviced office accommodation operated by Enterprise North East Trust, a company which provides property and start-up advice to small businesses. The office was equipped with:

- Four PCs with internet access and web-conferencing facilities, to enable remote hot-desk working;
- Wi-Fi access, allowing free internet access for those with their own laptop PCs;
- A state-of-the-art video-conferencing unit, allowing meetings to take place without the need for travel; and
- Access to a printer and fax machine.

At the Huntly Learning Centre, which is an outreach learning centre of Banff and Buchan College in Fraserburgh, both Aberdeenshire Council and the College agreed that the establishment of the remote office facilities within the centre would provide mutual benefits and thus rental costs at this site were waived. Similar facilities were provided at this site, with the exception that two

video-conferencing units were fitted; one located in a small interview room and the other within the centre's large meeting/conference room.

In order to encourage as much uptake as possible, the facilities have been provided completely free of charge, with all user costs borne by Aberdeenshire Council and the SustAccess project. The facilities are advertised as available for use on a drop-in basis, although it has been recommended that users contact the centres in advance to book a hot-desk or to use the video-conferencing equipment.

The management and maintenance of the PCs and Wi-Fi connections is provided by Instalec Networking Ltd, a technology based solution provider, who undertake regular site visits to ensure that all facilities are in efficient order. Helpdesk numbers linked to Instalec's expert staff are also provided at both IT Hot Stops. The video-conferencing equipment is provided by NuVideo. Outline costs of the main hardware and contracts involved in providing the IT Hot Stops are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Outline Costs of the IT Hot Stops.

Service	Operator	Contract / Capital Cost
Lease of Burnside Office	Enterprise North East Trust	£850 p/a
Lease of Huntly Learning Centre	Banff and Buchan College	Free
PCs (8 PCs and software)	Instalec	£11,500
PC Maintenance	Instalec	£12,000
Video-conferencing (3 units, maintenance and guarantee)	NuVideo	£17,000
Video-conferencing ISDN lines	BT	£1,400 p/a
Wi-Fi equipment	Instalec	£1,000

5. Monitoring the IT Hot Stops

In order to monitor the IT Hot Stops, and their impact in terms of delivering the aims of the project, a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire includes questions designed to:

- understand the demographics of the facility users (e.g. age, employment status etc);
- establish baseline information on how users normally travel to their place of work / meeting location (e.g. mode of travel, distance travelled etc); and
- estimate the time, cost and mileage savings of the users as a result of using the IT Hot Stop.

The questionnaire also contains information on other sustainable travel initiatives promoted by the Council, including links to the Council's car-sharing database and public transport timetables.

One of the benefits of basing the IT Hot Stops within the Burnside Business Centre in Peterhead and the Huntly Learning Centre is that both centres are

manned. The administrators at both sites are responsible for showing users to the facilities, providing some information on the project and providing them with the necessary passwords to use the facilities. The administrators are also responsible for distribution and collection of the questionnaires, as well as ensuring that any new users sign the 'Terms of Acceptable Use' policy developed for the IT Hot Stops.

6. Marketing

Prior to the launch of the remote offices and the follow-on marketing materials, it was considered essential to name the offices so that they suitably conveyed the benefits of the facilities on offer. Various names were considered including 'The Business Travel Reduction Office' ("too wordy and academic!"), 'The Remote Office' ("negative connotations") and 'The Virtual Office' ("sounds as if it does not exist!"). In the end, it was felt that the "IT Hot Stops" effectively conveys the sites as locations where anybody can drop-in for a spot of hot-desk working, a short video-conference meeting, or simply to check their email.

Once a name had been agreed, work began on preparing for the launch of the facilities. The launches took place in Huntly and Peterhead on the 5th and 7th of September 2006 respectively. The events took the form of an open-day with Council officers on hand to show interested members of the public, the media and business community the facilities on offer at the IT Hot Stops. Formal launches were staged over the lunchtime period, with speeches from local Councillors and others via video-conference. During the Huntly launch, for example, a speech was made by the Principal of Banff and Buchan College via video-conference in Fraserburgh, who discussed the potential of the Huntly IT Hot Stop to stage video-conference lectures to the College in the future. At the Peterhead launch, a toast was made by the Chairman of the SustAccess steering committee based in Gothenburg, Sweden. While the video-conference to Sweden was quite 'Eurovision' in nature, it was useful simply to highlight the high picture and sound quality of the video-conferencing equipment purchased for the site.

In terms of the promotion of the sites, the two offices have been marketed individually to reflect the different environmental settings of the IT Hot Stops and the different clientele that they each target. For example, whereas the business environment of the Burnside Business Centre has made it more appropriate to market the Peterhead site to business users, the Huntly Learning Centre is promoted at a community level given its alignment to Banff and Buchan College and its existing use by students, community groups and the general public. In addition, however, it is believed that local businesses as well as other organisations which have their headquarters based elsewhere (e.g. the NHS, police, social work departments) could be attracted to use the video-conferencing facilities and thus these groups have also been encouraged to use the Huntly IT Hot Stop.

Following the successful launch of the IT Hot Stops, a variety of media sources have been used to promote the facilities. Flyers and posters have

been sent to various locations throughout Aberdeenshire including Council Area Offices, community centres, libraries, and business centres. The local and regional newspapers have also included articles on the IT Hot Stops. Other 'free' sources of advertising have been used including articles in the local environmental publication, 'The Green Diary', as well as the Chamber of Commerce circulars. Immediately following the launch of the IT Hot Stops, radio adverts were developed for the local radio stations, WAVES and NECR. These adverts were primarily played during the peak morning and evening commuter periods – a deliberate ploy to capture commuters travelling from the areas to Aberdeen and to raise awareness levels about the need to reduce business mileage. Bus panel advertising has also been used to play on the time, cost and stress elements of congestion and commuting. Further press releases have been developed for use at key points in the year, such as when the winter weather arrived, to encourage people to work remotely rather than risk driving in icy road conditions. In the future it is intended to develop further press releases focusing on the real stories of actual IT Hot Stop users who can discuss how the offices have benefited them.

7. Critical Review

The following section attempts to outline some of the main benefits that it is believed can be delivered by the IT Hot Stops. Benefits are grouped into three general categories; economic, environmental, and social savings. Following this, some of the perceived negative aspects involved with remote working are considered.

Firstly, there are a number of economic benefits directly related to the use of the IT Hot Stops through their ability to reduce business mileage and the need to travel for meetings. By working from a hot-desk or video-conferencing into a meeting, instead of travelling to urban centres for such purposes, users of facilities like the IT Hot Stops could see a reduction in their petrol use, parking costs and car maintenance bills. Video-conferencing, specifically, also reduces the need for long-distance travel and the associated flight, taxi/hire cars, meal, phone and hotel costs that go with this. Furthermore, by reducing the need to travel and the unproductive time linked to travel, the IT Hot Stops offer the potential to increase work productivity and help to keep staff in the positions where they are likely to be more effective. This suggests that it would make commercial sense for companies to allow their employees to work remotely from a location such as the IT Hot Stops, at least for part of the working week. Moreover, a knock-on benefit of working remotely could be greater economic growth in rural commuter towns, as people tend to spend their money in the locations where they work.

Secondly, the IT Hot Stops offer the potential to reduce one's environmental footprint by reducing the need to travel. Savings include reducing car emissions and the pollution associated with this, reduced damage to the countryside through wear of car traffic, and a decrease in destruction to the environment through reduced demands for new roads and car parks.

Thirdly, there are a number of social or personal benefits connected to the use of the IT Hot Stops. For example, in line with some of the advantages outlined above, the time savings associated with the use of ICT to reduce the need to travel (e.g. avoided flight time, waiting times, preparation and “down time”) can provide increased family time. A reduction in stress, which is often caused by sitting in congested traffic during the daily commute to the office, can also lead to improved personal health. In addition, from a safety perspective, reducing the need to travel should in turn reduce the potential for road accidents, deaths and injuries.

Supplementary to the above are a range of benefits specifically related to video-conferencing as identified by Davis and Weinstein (2002). They highlight that justifying video-conferencing can be challenging for a number of reasons, including that comparisons are made to business travel, which offers face-to-face contact, glamour and ego-satisfaction from the travel experience itself; audio-conferencing is typically a lower cost alternative; and limited usage of video-conferencing equipment makes experience rarer. Despite this, video-conferencing can offer numerous benefits. For example, the use of video-conferencing can project an up-to-date, efficient and professional image for a firm. Video-conferencing also has a number of benefits over telephone meetings including increased impact and focus (e.g. it has been suggested that people don't waste time video-conferencing as they often do in face-to-face meetings), enhanced persuasiveness, and expedited development of trust and comfort.

On the other hand, there are still many technophobes that are unsure about the benefits of video-conferencing and feel that nothing beats a firm handshake and meeting in person. A lack of trust on behalf of companies in preventing their employees to work remotely could be another barrier to promoting the use of the IT Hot Stops, although the increasing emphasis on flexible working, promoted through Workplace Travel Plans, should help to reduce this constraint in the future. Another potential barrier to the use of the IT Hot Stops is the fact that, nowadays, many people have their own personal home and laptop computers. For this reason, the IT Hot Stops have been equipped with Wi-Fi access in an attempt to capture those people who have their own laptop PCs but might prefer a more professional environment, free from home distractions. Nevertheless, results on usage of the IT Hot Stops to date also suggest that with such a novel and innovative concept, it will take some time before they are attractive to users and are efficient from a cost-benefit perspective.

8. Some Early Results

At the time of writing, usage at the IT Hot Stops has been disappointing. At the Peterhead IT Hot Stop, there have been 17 users and at the Huntly IT Hot Stop there have been 19 users. This could be down to some of the previous reasons offered as disincentives to working remotely or could be down to the administration staff sometimes forgetting to ensure users complete the questionnaires. The closure of the offices during the Christmas period, as well as the relatively mild winter could be considered as other factors that have

contributed to the low usage levels to date. Fuel costs have also not increased as much as had been anticipated over the last year or so.

Despite this, results from the completed questionnaires suggest that the centres are delivering benefits and that these benefits are being recognised by the users. Some key results are highlighted below:

- At the Peterhead IT Hot Stop, 40% of users estimated that their visit to the site had saved them over £20 in travel costs, while 40% of users stated that the use of the IT Hot Stop had saved them over 2 hours in travel time. With regards to mileage savings, 40% stated that the IT Hot Stops had saved them over 10 miles.
- At the Huntly IT Hot Stop, the benefits appeared to be less pronounced, reflecting the facilities' use primarily by community groups. For example, only 11% estimated that they had saved over £20 by using the IT Hot Stops (47% estimated that the facility had saved them up to £10). Time savings were also less marked at the Huntly site with 11% estimating that they had saved over 2 hours (26% estimated that they had saved 30 minutes to one hour; 16% estimated a 1 to 2 hour travel time saving). In relation to mileage savings at the Huntly site, 42% said that they had saved over 10 miles through using the IT Hot Stop.

The questionnaire also asks respondents to state what they believe to be the main benefits of the IT Hot Stops. Notable results are that 53% stated a reduction in travel time to be a main benefit, 42% agreed that a reduction in travel costs and avoiding parking problems was a key benefit of the facilities, while 39% highlighted reduced commuter stress as a benefit. However, only 25% saw business mileage reduction as a main advantage of the IT Hot Stops.

9. Lessons Learned

Given that the IT Hot Stops are part of a pilot initiative, it is worthwhile highlighting some early problems encountered and lessons learned in their development. Indeed the novelty of this project was confirmed during a best practice background literature review which revealed an absence of similar facilities elsewhere.

In terms of problems, there have been a number of operational difficulties experienced during the establishment of the IT Hot Stops. One such problem involved how to manage the potential conflicting use of the Peterhead site. Since this site is located in the professional setting of the Burnside Business Centre, it was considered that opening up this facility to students and community groups could discourage potential business individuals. For this reason, and as alluded to earlier, it was eventually decided that the Peterhead IT Hot Stop should be more business-orientated and marketed at business users only. Nevertheless, this does not overcome the problem faced by the centre administrators in distinguishing students etc from business users. Another difficulty with the Peterhead office is that it is relatively small with the video-conferencing unit cordoned off in a corner of the room. In order to avoid

the potential disruption faced by hot-desk users when the video-conferencing equipment is in use, the centre administrators have been instructed to close off the office when the video-conferencing unit is booked.

Another operational difficulty has been how to ensure that questionnaires are completed by all users, especially at the Huntly IT Hot Stop, where there are a number of other PCs available differentiated from the SustAccess branded PCs. The problem here is that if the users know they have to fill out a questionnaire each time they use the SustAccess PCs, more often than not they will choose to work from one of the other PCs.

A further problem that should be highlighted to any Local Authorities or organisations interested in developing facilities similar to the IT Hot Stops is the need for advanced planning in procuring the ICT. The IT Hot Stop project in Aberdeenshire was held up and delayed due to a number of problems related to establishing the ICT networks at the sites. One reason for this was that the Council's own IT department was not prepared to take responsibility for the maintenance of the facilities since they were not on Council premises. Once it was decided to take on a professional IT solution provider to manage this side of the project, tender delays relating to the complexity of the mix of requirements and suppliers, also held up the implementation of the IT Hot Stops. Again, these operational problems can perhaps be attributed to the novelty of the project.

The need for a detailed marketing plan from the outset of the project, as opposed to advertising on an ad-hoc basis is another lesson that Aberdeenshire Council has learnt through this project.

Despite the disappointing results to date, there are a number of positive lessons that have been learned and are to be highlighted. The general consensus of officers involved in the development of the IT Hot Stops is that the Huntly facility has been somewhat more successful than the Peterhead site and offers the greatest opportunity to be a success in the long term for a number of reasons. One reason for this assumption is the strong partnership working virtues at the Huntly IT Hot Stop. For example, the establishment of the Huntly IT Hot Stop has been a collaborative effort involving Aberdeenshire Council, the Huntly Learning Centre, Banff and Buchan College, Aberdeenshire Town's Partnership, and Scottish Enterprise. The Aberdeenshire Town's Partnership Co-ordinator for Huntly for example has strong links to the local business community and continues to promote the IT Hot Stop to groups such as the Huntly Business Association. Scottish Enterprise Grampian and their E-Business Demonstration Centre is located adjacent to the Huntly Learning Centre and are also very supportive of the facility, even offering free e-business advice and tailored tutorials on the benefits of video-conferencing to the IT Hot Stop users. In short, by giving greater feelings of project ownership to local people, who feel responsible for the development of their area, it is believed that the IT Hot Stop will have a greater chance of succeeding in the long run.

Besides the ethos of partnership working, another reason that it is felt that the Huntly IT Hot Stop offers the greatest opportunity to succeed is that it can offer a wider range of benefits to the community and is not solely restricted to business use. For example, the Learning Centre is already used by local schools and students and it is hoped that in the future the video-conferencing facilities will be used by local students to follow lectures offered by Banff and Buchan College in Fraserburgh and the Universities in Aberdeen, or elsewhere, without physically travelling to these locations. Furthermore, given that the Huntly Learning Centre already acts as a valuable community hub, it is hoped that some of the ideas and aims of the IT Hot Stops, namely that to increase rural accessibility by reducing the need to travel, can be considered in a wider sense to add value to the existing facilities offered at the Centre. For instance, the Huntly Learning Centre boasts a beauty room and salon, offering short-courses in beauty therapy and hairdressing to students. Making use of these facilities for visiting dentists, physiotherapists and other specialists could potentially increase the accessibility of rural people to health and other services by bringing mobile services to them. In sum, it is believed that being able to expand the use of the IT Hot Stops to offer a wider range of community facilities, could further help to deliver some of the aims of this project and in turn boost usage levels.

Finally, to date the IT Hot Stops have not been promoted to Council employees and have been targeted solely to private users. However, given the low usage levels, it is believed that an opportunity exists to encourage local champions from the Authority to use the IT Hot Stops. The use of the facilities by Council employees would also be a strong sign of corporate leadership and that the Council is leading by example in the efforts to address travel behaviour change, which is the main theme within the Council's very own Local Transport Strategy.

10. Options for the Future Development of the IT Hot Stops

Following the launch of the facilities, a number of opportunities to develop the IT Hot Stops, widen their scope and ultimately to increase their usage are being explored. As indicated in the previous section, the Huntly Learning Centre is to be equipped with a video-projector to encourage remote lectures to take place from the centre. This initiative should have benefits to local students by increasing their accessibility to education, training and qualifications without the need to travel. Discussions have also taken place with local schools about the possibility of using the video-conferencing equipment to take part in the Global Schools Project, which promotes cross-cultural learning and understanding of international development amongst pupils through video-conferencing to schools in different countries. Encouraging youth groups to use the facilities, and more generally sustainable transport, is considered to be vital to fostering the development of future generations of sustainable transport users.

From an early stage, an identified drawback to the use of the video-conferencing equipment at the IT Hot Stops was the lack of similar facilities in Aberdeen City to video-conference to. Therefore, in order to 'complete the

loop' and provide a City IT Hot Stop, a partnership has been set up between Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen College relating to the use of the College's video-conferencing equipment as part of the SustAccess project. As part of the Partnership Agreement, Aberdeenshire Council have agreed to pay Aberdeen College the costs for the public hire of the equipment if it is used to video-conference to either of the IT Hot Stops in Peterhead or Huntly. It has also been recommended that a location to the south of Aberdeen, such as Stonehaven, would be an ideal location for a third Aberdeenshire IT Hot Stop, due to the high commuting rates and congestion problems along the A90 south of Aberdeen.

Early discussions with the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum (ACSEF) have highlighted potential linkages with their 'Business Beacons' initiative. ACSEF are keen to build on the IT Hot Stop concept by creating 'business beacons' or satellite offices on the main radial routes into Aberdeen City. Establishing these new-build satellite offices at Park and Ride locations around the city has also been raised as a possibility. In the longer term, the IT Hot Stop concept may be developed across the Aberdeen City and Shire region with partners such as ACSEF.

Finally, a more advanced project that Aberdeenshire Council have been involved in to promote the IT Hot Stops and the general culture of business travel reduction is the development of an extranet website facility in partnership with the SusSET Interreg IIIC Project (www.susset.org). This project, which is another European sponsored programme, involves developing an extranet website to promote each of the small towns signed up to the initiative (including the SustAccess town of Huntly) and to support business efficiency and information exchange between these towns.

11. Conclusions

In conclusion, this paper has attempted to provide some background information and early lessons learned in the development of the IT Hot Stops piloted by Aberdeenshire Council. The project is due to end in October 2007 although Aberdeenshire are considering options to extend this pilot in recognition that with such an innovative and novel project, it is likely to take some time before a fair judgment and evaluation of the facilities can be made.

A review of the recently published National Transport Strategy (Scottish Executive 2006) reveals that the Scottish Executive also believes there to be a greater role for teleworking in the future, as part of a programme of SMART measures such as travel plans and high quality information to encourage more sustainable travel, or no travel at all in the case of the IT Hot Stops. It is hoped that some of the lessons learned through the SustAccess project can inform some of this work at the national level.

In closing, it is to be reemphasised that the IT Hot Stops are still in their infancy and while results to date have been disappointing, it is essential that pilot initiatives like this are given time. This paper has only touched upon the concept of travel behaviour change and has not really considered some of the

external factors that affect people's travel choices, including fuel prices etc. A more detailed analysis would be required to gain a better understanding of the factors that could encourage a shift towards more sustainable modes, including remote working. While 'SMARTer' choices like the IT Hot Stops alone are unlikely to make a significant contribution to reducing traffic growth, it is believed that they can support the wider drive to raise awareness on sustainable travel modes by making people at least reconsider their travel habits and think more widely about some of the economic, environmental and social impacts of their daily commute. It is therefore recommended that the development of facilities similar to the IT Hot Stops is given further consideration in the future, particularly facilities that offer the potential to deliver wider community benefits through facilitating access to education and health.

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