



Heathrow expansion

There are many reasons to oppose the Davies Commission decision to recommend a third runway at Heathrow.

The immediate problem is the fate of people who live around the airport. 268,000 people are currently said to be affected by aircraft noise in the area. According to rival Gatwick's calculation a further 320,000 will be affected when the new runway is opened. This would involve the demolition of 783 homes including almost all of the village of Harmondsworth. There are, of course, many people who are keen on the expansion, including those who work or might hope to work there, but surveys suggest that the vast majority of the population of London see no need for airport expansion at all.

Air quality is perhaps the next most important consideration. Many areas of Lon-

don breach the EU legal maximum for NO₂ pollution. Marylebone Road and Heathrow are currently the worst offenders. A larger airport will clearly make the situation worse. This will not only be from aircraft but also increased surface traffic. Air travel pollutes to an extraordinary degree. If we are to keep global temperatures to a tolerable level there has to be a drastic reduction in air travel, not its expansion.

But even on present levels of need, is expansion necessary? The argument relies upon the demand for more long-haul flights for people on business. But two-thirds of flights are not business, business travel is often only made as a perk and in any case is actually falling. Most flights are made by a small minority of the population (15 per cent take 70 per cent of all flights) and it is often

the cheapness which creates the demand rather than the other way round. According to HACAN (Heathrow Association for Control of Airport Noise) 20 to 25 per cent of flights from Heathrow are short-haul and many of those could be made by rail. A Frequent Flying Levy has been suggested by a number of organisations including the Campaign for Better Transport to make it more expensive for people to make a large number of flights whilst protecting the interests of those who make perhaps one flight a year to go on holiday.

An intriguing question is political. Despite the fact that a considerable number of Conservative and Labour MPs are in favour of the third runway, spurred on by business voices such as the CBI, there is considerable opposition in both parties. The Prime Minister himself is on record as

saying that a 'third runway at Heathrow is not going ahead, no ifs, no buts'. Boris Johnson is a leading opponent, as is Zac Goldsmith who is likely to be the Tory candidate for London mayor. There are also a number of MPs with constituencies within the Heathrow noise envelope who are either opposed or under great pressure. A surprising opponent is Willie Walsh, chief executive of British Airlines, who complains about the vast cost, some of which might be billed to the airline. But of course a number of opponents are not opposed to new airports but only to an expansion of Heathrow. A prominent opponent of any new facility is Jeremy Corbyn, as leader of the Labour Party. Heathrow expansion is not a done deal although a fight against any expansion anywhere is a tougher nut to crack.
Chris Barker

Our Newsletter is sent out to our London members and other contacts. The group exists to campaign for sustainable transport solutions in London and to support the work of the Campaign nationally. If you have not already done so we would be pleased if you would also join our group and take part in our London based activities.

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Regular meetings of the group are held in central London.

The Newsletter is edited by Chris Barker. Contributors are welcomed. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Campaign for Better Transport.

Previous issues of the newsletter can be found at <http://bettertransport-london.org.uk>.

The North-South Transport divide

Before the election the Chancellor of the Exchequer made great play of his plans for a Northern Powerhouse.

Central to this were to be transport infrastructure projects: HS3 to follow on from HS2 (which he maintains is for the benefit of the north), and electrification of the Midland Main Line.

How quickly these plans are overtaken by the need for austerity. Network Rail inefficiencies have been blamed for 'pausing' electrification of both the trans-Pennine route and the Midland Main Line. As they are paused sine die it is hard

to see the difference between this and cancelling the schemes: any future decision seems likely to await the next government.

A report from two northern universities suggests that infrastructure investment remains biased towards the south. However, this is a case for investing more in the north, not for diverting funds from one to the other. It ignores the severe overcrowding on trains and tubes in the south-east, and the expectation of further demand resulting from population growth which is happening despite a woeful lack of new housing.

On the other hand, counting HS2 as an infrastructure project for

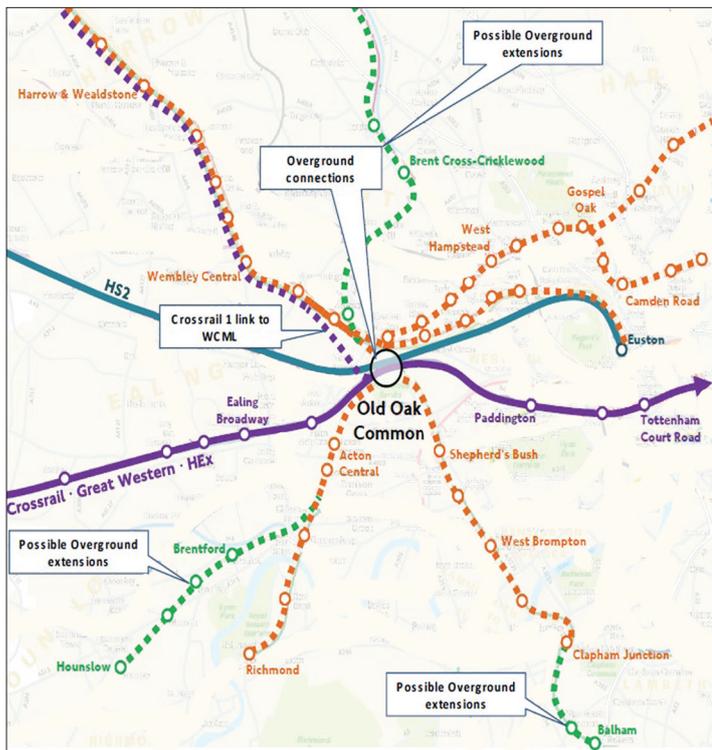
the north is somewhat disingenuous. All the evidence of previous major rail lines into London is that it is London that benefits. Residents of Grantham and Ashford can more easily commute into work in London. There has been no massive expansion of the local economies in either town.

It has never been clear how much HS3 might be a new high speed line between the major northern cities. Were a new line to be built it would lessen the blow of delaying the electrification of the existing line, but it would take a long time and there would undoubtedly be campaigns to stop it from those

in its path. On the other hand, electrification of the existing line will involve disruption during the construction period of a line for which there is little or no satisfactory alternative provision. The government is trying to persuade councils in Yorkshire to adopt a regional mayor with powers similar to the London mayor, despite the fact that voters overwhelmingly rejected the concept in referendum only three years ago. It is far from clear that a mayor could force through a High Speed 3 line. HS2 is not a mayoral project, and even Crossrail has required central government support to happen, thirty years after its route was safeguarded.

The needs of the north and south remain very different. Speed, or the lack of it, is an issue across the Pennines. In the south, investment is needed to address capacity issues, not on a predict and provide basis but with a view to reducing the distances needed to travel.

Andrew Bosi



Old Oak Common

The Greater London Authority will shortly publish its 'Opportunity Area Planning Framework' (OAPF) for Old Oak Common and Park Royal, the area around the new HS2 and Crossrail stations.

A more detailed (and democratic) 'Local Plan' will follow from Boris's new Development Corporation by the end of next year.

Walking, cycling and public transport are supposedly central to the Old Oak plans. Car use will be suppressed, with only one parking space per five homes. However, that may increase the commercial demand for small flats compared to larger family

homes, in what is really still car-orientated outer London.

Two new London Overground stations have been announced, for trains from Stratford to Richmond and Clapham Junction. The mayor has publicised brand new services to Hounslow, via the A4 Golden Mile Opportunity Area, and using the orbital Dudding Hill freight line as a 'North Circular Road bypass' to Wembley, Brent Cross and Colindale OAs.

There will be 24 Crossrail trains per hour through central London by 2018, but only ten of them will run west to Reading and Heathrow. To soak up some of the spare trains, and to relieve Euston station during rebuilding, a new Crossrail service from Old Oak Common to Wembley Central and the West Coast Main Line (WCML) out to Tring is planned. A better northern terminus might be Milton Keynes, but there are no toilets on Crossrail trains!

Current HS2 plans are to permanently sever the connection at Oak Oak to the 1906 Great Western Railway line to Birmingham. As a piece of serendipity, the WCML link will allow the 1906 line to stay connected, and there could be more Crossrail trains via South Ruislip (in Boris's new constituency) out to High Wycombe, for Chiltern trains to Oxford, Birmingham and Aylesbury.

John Cox

Overground now for West London

The Mayor has reiterated his desire to add new London Overground (LO) services in west and north London, albeit as so-far unfunded projects and with no definite timetable. He has published a map of future Old Oak Common rail connections which would mean probably four trains per hour from Old Oak Common to Hounslow via the Golden Mile opportunity area, and the same along the Dudding Hill freight line to Brent Cross Cricklewood and Colindale opportunity areas.

These routes were not mentioned though in the recent Old Oak 'Choose Plan A, B or C' consultation TfL plans new LO stations in Hythe Road and Old Oak Common Lane.

It would be wise to widen the North London Line Acton Wells bridge over the Central Line to four tracks to allow for more services and growth in freight traffic.

HS2 Ltd. has tried to keep its Crossrail reserving sidings just east of this bridge to avoid having to rebuild any part of the rusting two-track bridge.

TfL Improves Bus Safety Reporting

After a successful campaign by a TfL bus crash survivor, TfL has recently taken two important actions to facilitate independent scrutiny of the safety of its subcontracted bus operations.

1. Bus Casualty Data is now Published every Quarter on TfL's Website.

In September 2013, TfL agreed to start publishing data about the number of casualties reported in incidents involving its subcontracted bus fleet. Six weeks after each quarter-end, TfL makes this raw data available for download on its website: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/buses>

In calendar 2014 (the 'Year of the Bus') TfL reported 2279 Injuries involving TfL buses, including ten fatalities and 1300 serious injuries/requiring hospitalisation.

TfL advises that this data 'covers incidents reported to TfL by bus companies. Incidents are reported regardless of blame and severity, leaving investigators to draw whatever conclusions they can from the raw figures. While TfL could perhaps provide more detailed Bus Casualty Data (eg, it is not possible to identify collision hotspots at any level lower than the borough in which the incident occurred), we now have much more transparent data than TfL has previously made available (and then, only through a freedom of information request). With further analysis, interrogation and discussion of this now-published data by the public and press, it is hoped TfL will be inspired to release more bus safety information for public scrutiny, for example its own analyses of these incidents as well as its estimation of the costs they impose on public services (eg, Police, Ambulance, National Health Service) in a more timely fashion. If TfL is keeping this data in realtime, it should be available immediately after quarter's end.

2. Confidential Incident Reporting & Analysis System (CIRAS) to be extended to TfL Bus Drivers in early 2016

CIRAS's expansion to the TfL bus network in London gives bus operations employees an extra way of reporting any concerns, comple-

menting reporting and investigating procedures that are already in place. CIRAS receives health, safety, security & environmental concerns from all employees. Employee personal information is always kept confidential while the independent body liaises with the subscribing organisation (in this case, a TfL bus subcontractor). CIRAS began in 1996 when a team from Strathclyde University was asked to introduce a confidential reporting system for UK rail company ScotRail. CIRAS was extended to the entire UK rail industry (including the London Underground network) in 2000.

While the subcontracting franchises of TfL's London's bus network are set to become the first in the UK to adopt the scheme, the expansion of CIRAS to its bus operations only begs the question: when will this proven safety scheme be extended to all surface fleets operating under contract to TfL? With three cyclists having been killed by HGVs operating under contract to the TfL-managed Crossrail Project since November 2013, one can only assume TfL will find itself under increasing pressure from campaigners to extend CIRAS to all its road



operations subcontractors. Finally, it is expected that TfL's nationally-operating bus subcontractors will be compelled to extend CIRAS to all their entire UK bus operations. With increasing numbers of regional and urban councils running bus operations according to the 'TfL franchise model', having different bus safety regimes for the same companies operating in different regions and cities is unacceptable.

TfL's decision to support independent scrutiny of the safety of its bus operations is particularly welcomed by bus crash survivors

like me. That these recent TfL policy changes may well serve as a catalyst for national action provides some assurance that, by focusing on the public sector's obligation to be transparent, campaigners can ensure that even the weakest voices can be heard in the shaping of local and national transport policy.

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[@comadad](https://twitter.com/comadad) #LondonBusWatchTfL
Improves Bus Safety Reporting

Garden Bridge Boris' last vanity project?

Opposition to proposals for a new pedestrian bridge across the Thames between the Victoria Embankment and the South Bank is growing. According to a spokesman for the Garden Bridge Trust: 'The bridge is designed to offer pedestrians a new, and free, route across the river Thames'. However one of its opponents, the Taxpayers' Alliance, describes it as a 'grotesque white elephant which suffers from an obscene lack of scrutiny'.

Although billed as a public footbridge it will in fact be a costly private venture, leaving its owners free to limit its use (for example forbidding cycling), to close it at night and for corporate events, and perhaps, ultimately, to charge for its use. Despite this £60 million of public money has been pledged for its construction and maintenance, £30 million from the GLA and another £30 million from the Government.



Amongst organisations condemning it are the Ramblers' Association, the Green Party, the London Cycling Campaign and a number of distinguished bridge engineers. Hugh Johnson of the Metropolitan Gardens Association doubts whether the garden experience would be pleasurable – 'squashed together on a bridge in the middle of the river the horticultural possibilities are limited'.

Another pedestrian bridge across the Thames, this time a public one, is planned between Canary Wharf and Rotherhithe. A feasibility study is being carried out by Sustrans on behalf of TfL.



No more diesels

The Greater London Authority Environmental Committee has reported on the dangers from diesel motors. They are proposing that the mayor should introduce the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) before 2020 and the zone should be wider and stronger. They also suggest that the mayor should take forward the mayor’s proposal for a scrappage scheme linked to replacing non-compliant vehicles with low-emission vehicles and that low-emission taxis should be rolled out by 2018. Meanwhile the mayor of Paris is going further than that and is proposing to ban diesel vehicles entirely from Paris by 2020

Airport expansion – Air quality issues

Simon Birkett of Clean Air London adds further ammunition to the arguments against expansion of airports in the London area. In a letter to Sir Howard Davies, Chair of the Airports Commission, he points out that both schemes for airport expansion at Heathrow (extending runway 1 or creating a third runway) would cause aggravated breaches of the NO2 limit which is already illegally exceeded in some areas of London including the Marylebone Road.

The Gatwick scheme is predicted to worsen air quality (in terms of annual mean NO2 concentrations) at about 21,000 properties. This would not be consistent with the duty on European member states to maintain the levels below the limit values and also ‘endeavour to preserve the best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development’.

In a landmark judgement the European Supreme Court ordered that the Government must submit a proper new air quality plan for the UK no later than 31st December 2015.

Overground expands

London Overground expanded their operations on 31st May to include the routes from Liverpool Street to Enfield Town, Cheshunt (via Seven Sisters) and Chingford. They also took over the line from Romford to Upminster. The new service was launched in a ceremony at Enfield Town on 1st June by Jonathan Fox, Director of London Rail. The station name signs already incorporated the orange Overground bar and circle and the first of the re-liveried trains was at the station for inspection.

London TravelWatch said: ‘We hope that this transfer of responsibility to TfL will become a model for national rail services elsewhere in London, especially south of the river where passengers have had a raw deal for far too long’.

Further to our reference to the cage-like structure installed at Walthamstow Central to segregate Overground from Underground passengers we are pleased to note that it was removed during the August closure of the eastern end of the Victoria Line. There had been widespread opposition to the ‘cage’ from local user groups and individual residents and it is encouraging to see a positive reaction to the power of popular opinion.

Silvertown tunnel becomes political

TfL’s proposal to duplicate the Blackwall Tunnel by building a new tunnel linking Blackwall Tunnel Approach on the south side of the river with Silvertown Way on the north has the support of mayor Boris Johnson and is supported by most Labour mayoral candidates. It is however opposed by the Greens and is likely also to be opposed by the Lib Dems.

There is now a strong possibility that Zac Goldsmith will throw in his hat for the Tories and, as an environmental activist, he is likely to oppose the tunnel. This could lead to a situation in which Labour is the only party supporting it, possibly costing them enough votes to lose the election.

Not all Labour candidates, however, support the tunnel. Transport journalist Christian Wolmar is certainly an opponent. He said: ‘The case for the Silertown tunnel is by no means proved. In particular, the environmental conse-

quences for people living on the route will be disastrous. Public transport alternatives have worked well in improving south east London transport over the past two decades and should be the focus for more investment, along with support for cycling and walking. It has been demonstrated time and again that new road capacity simply attracts extra traffic and in an era where the dangers of climate change are being recognised internationally there is no justification for encouraging road traffic.’

Diesels for the Met’s Watford link

At the behest of the DfT, TfL is examining the possibility of making the Metropolitan line’s new route to Watford Junction suitable for Chiltern’s diesel trains. The plan is to institute a route from Watford, not just to Amersham which could be run by Metropolitan trains, but to Aylesbury and perhaps beyond.

Baker Street

The next gyratory to fall is likely to be Baker Street/Gloucester Place. It is hoped to start the work in summer 2016 and to finish by Spring 2017.

Unlike other gyratory removals it is not proposed to concentrate all the buses on one of the roads. Most routes will run both ways in Baker Street but route 274 will instead use Gloucester Place and 30 and 74 will continue with their one way working.

Get lethal lorries off London’s roads

The London Cycling Campaign is petitioning the mayor to end the dangers posed by lorries on London’s roads. They are calling for a rush hour lorry ban – 40% of cycling fatalities involving lorries occur between 8am and 9.30am; improved driver vision (it’s hard for the driver in a traditional lorry cab to see what’s in front of their vehicle) and stronger enforcement (operators must never be allowed to put profits before lives by allowing unlicensed, untrained lorry drivers, or unsafe vehicles, to operate on our roads). A poll suggests that a ban would be supported by the majority of Londoners.

The petition can be found at <http://e-activist.com/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1745&ea.campaign.id=40332&ea.tracking.id=76117678&ea.url>.

20 mph limits

Haringey has just added itself to the string of boroughs which are making 20 mph the norm on all or most of their streets. These now include Islington, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Camden, The City, Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. Croydon and Hammersmith and Fulham are consulting. Wandsworth councillors have now also endorsed the policy despite the opposition of officers. It looks as if Westminster and Kensington are going to be surrounded.



20mph in Haringey. To be unveiled on 15th February.