

TRANSPORT 2025

by John Hawkins

The TfL report Transport 2025 (June 2006) projects an unbelievable 30% increase in peak public transport demand by 2025. It considers three possible options: making the best of the current network, influencing demand, and providing new capacity. The PPP already promises an average 26% increase in LU train service capacity, but provides no capacity increase for stations. Congestion relief schemes are therefore under consideration for Paddington, Tottenham Court Road (both linked to Crossrail), Victoria, and Bank.

Roads and LU already operate near capacity, whilst improvements for both are costly after a long legal process. Crossrail, currently before Parliament, is considered essential to meet demand between Heathrow, the City and Docklands. Most short-term relief is anticipated through national rail measures – although few capacity improvements are currently committed.

An earlier report, Rail 2025, considered such measures, and is summarised on a double page – I have been unable to trace the original document.

The major projects proposed are the Thameslink upgrade with longer, more frequent trains; and a Waterloo terminus upgrade for longer trains to the south-west.

Lower cost measures listed are:

- Four-tracking between Cheshunt and Tottenham Hale, whilst diverting Chingford trains via Stratford into Liverpool Street.
- Conversion of the Watford line from Harrow & Wealdstone for the Bakerloo.
- Lengthening trains and platforms on southern and south-eastern lines.
- Joining up the west and north London lines and the east (ELL) and south London lines.
- Increasing frequencies to provide new orbital routes between some of London's busiest town centres and interchange hubs.
- Additional capacity in the Thames Gateway through longer c2c trains, and integration with DLR and Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) services.
- Provision of additional rolling stock, with reconfiguration (? less seats) and refurbishment of existing stock to make best use of infrastructure.

These investments together with Crossrail and some simpler operating patterns would increase peak capacity by up to 40%. (Only Chiltern seems to miss out!). At the same time rail freight demand is expected to grow by over 32%, and additional rail freight sites around the M25 and in London are envisaged, particularly for construction materials. The completion of the CTRL will allow continental-gauge trains (with 25% greater cubic capacity than standard UK trains) to reach London, but gauge improvements will be needed to allow these trains to cross London.

Even after all of the above enhancements, there will still be a need for additional investment in newer technologies to get more capacity on the existing network, and for targeted extensions to enable switching from the most crowded routes to those with capacity.

The two most crowded corridors mentioned are north-east London to the West End, where additional capacity is required to relieve the Victoria and Piccadilly lines; and

inner south London to central London, where possible extension of the Bakerloo or Northern Line (? from Kennington) south to relieve the Victoria Line (and possibly some national rail services) is mentioned. This area would also benefit from the proposed Cross River Tram which would run through the centre of London between Euston and Waterloo, with branches to Brixton and Peckham in the south, and to Camden Town and King's Cross in the north.

The TfL will now consider the right balance of policy options, taking into account feedback received, to influence revisions of the Mayor's Transport Strategy, long-term investment and policy decisions, and submissions to central Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and also to their Transport Innovation Fund.