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RAIL 2025

by John Hawkins

The article on Transport 2025 (in *Underground News* for October 2006) referred to an earlier TfL report, Rail 2025, which I could not trace. An apparently revised version of Rail 2025 has recently come to light: "A rail strategy for London's future" dated Autumn 2006 (the Internet file was created November 2006, last modified January 2007).

This report is principally concerned with making a case for improved National Rail services. It states that rail passenger kilometres in the London region rose by 60% since 1994-95, whilst the service has only increased by about a quarter, rather less in peak periods. The conclusions were summarised in my earlier article. However, some interesting details are included.

Phased schemes for the Overground concession are listed:

1. "Service level commitment 2" –

West Croydon – Dalston Junction, 4 trains per hour (tph), 4-car.

Crystal Palace – Dalston Junction, 4 tph, 4-car.

New Cross – Caledonian Road, 4 tph, 4-car (shown as Highbury & Islington in the text).

North London Line: Stratford – Richmond, 4 tph, 3/4-car.

North London Line: Stratford – Caledonian Road, 2 tph, 3/4-car.

Barking – Clapham Junction, 2 tph, 3/4-car.

Barking – Gospel Oak, 2 tph, 3/4-car.

Willesden Junction – Clapham Junction, 2 tph, 4-car.

Watford Junction – Croydon, 2 tph, 4-car.

2. "Service level commitment 3" –

4 tph Barking – Clapham Junction via Gospel Oak.

4 tph Stratford – Queen's Park via Primrose Hill.

Euston – Watford DC line converted from Queen's Park north to Bakerloo Line operation.

3. "Beyond" –

East London line services extended west from Dalston and Surrey Quays to Clapham Junction at 4 tph (diagram suggests 2015 timeline).

No other routes are covered in such detail.

The report assumes the construction of Crossrail Line 1 (linking Paddington with Stratford and Abbey Wood) which makes the greatest contribution to improved journey times. Overall, it will bring an additional 90,000 people within 45 minutes of key employment opportunities.

All other rail proposals bring only an further 32,000 people within such a distance, and leave overcrowding worst on lines from Paddington, making one wonder why more than half of all westbound Crossrail trains will terminate there.

Project appraisal is shown against a 'do minimum' case which contains all schemes currently funded in TfL's Business Plan/investment programme, including the Watford Junction/Croxley Link, Chiltern Railways 'Evergreen' capacity upgrade, and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic services to Kent.

Hopes for relief to the northern ends of the Victoria and Piccadilly lines depend on later construction of Crossrail Line 2, formerly known as the Chelsea-Hackney Line. Route safeguards for the line are currently up for renewal. They show a route linking the Wimbledon and Epping branches from Parsons Green to Leytonstone, with stations at King's Road, Victoria, Piccadilly Circus, Tottenham Court Road, Kings Cross, Angel, Essex Road, Dalston Junction, Hackney Central and Homerton. Access to potential depot sites is safeguarded at Stratford, Battersea and Wimbledon Park.

There is no mention of the possible extension of the Bakerloo or Northern lines to relieve the south end of the Victoria Line, included in the Transport 2025 report of June 2006.