



New high speed rail lines can be a means of providing extra capacity and freeing up space on existing lines for increased freight and local passenger services.

However, there are currently some major problems with the plans for the HS2 project as they stand, not least for the London end of it. First things first: the project proposals do not form part of a coherent national transport strategy.

At the same time as promoting HS2 the Government is also embarking upon a major programme of road building on the strategic road network, promoting car-based development and reducing funds available for local authorities to support important bus services.

It is still unclear how HS2 will connect with the rest of the transport network and how it will benefit areas of the country not directly connected to it. In particular, future links

to Scotland and Wales are unclear making it difficult to see how HS2 will compete with short-distance aviation. There has been insufficient work on the options for using the capacity on the existing lines released by HS2, and the potential benefits that this capacity could bring by enabling lower carbon development based around the current rail network. Also crucially, too many of the proposed HS2 stations are in out of town locations with only vague plans for connections to other public transport.

HS2 could, if linked to other transport and planning policies, help spread economic activity around the country, but pursued in isolation, it could simply reinforce the imbalance between London and the South East and the rest of the UK.

Neither has the Government yet set out its policy on HS2 fares. We already have some of the highest rail fares in Eu-

rope with regular commuters hit the hardest by annual season ticket hikes. Passengers travelling on the existing HS1 line pay a premium and if this formula is applied to HS2, many people could be excluded from using HS2 services and it will become a railway for the rich.

But in London, there are particular problems. The plans for connections at Old Oak Common and Euston could not unreasonably be described as a mess. It is astonishing that the plans can have got so far without some major operational issues having been resolved. Even the new Mayor has called on the Euston HS2 development to be halted till a solution can be found. The construction of the HS2 terminus there would cause interminable disruption without apparently creating a satisfactory connection to HS1 and other transport. Alternatives for improving the

connection at Old Oak Common must be given serious consideration urgently.

Ongoing investment in public transport is vital to the success of our country so the very substantial government and industry support already committed to the rail network should be celebrated. New lines can, if developed properly, be vital in helping increase capacity where it's needed and enabling significant further shift from private car use, road freight and aviation to rail and connected sustainable transport. That's why we're currently working to try to get Parliament to amend the High Speed Rail Bill, which confers the powers to construct the scheme and sets out the plans. We hope that the Government will ensure that HS2 will achieve these aims long before any construction begins.

James MacColl
CBT Head of Campaigns

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.

To contact the group write to Chris Barker, Campaign for Better Transport, 46 Redston Road, London N8 7HJ. E-mail: chrisbarker46@gmail.com; phone 020 8347 7684. 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 wages of pollution



It has been nearly a year since Volkswagen admitted they had intentionally programmed 11 million cars to cheat emissions testing.

VW had invested heavily in flawed diesel technology and wanted to max out its investment. Cheating allowed them to market fraudulent 'clean diesel' passenger cars as the way forward. Tax incentives and encouragement by Government to go 'green' contributed to London licenced diesel vehicles reaching a record 774,513 in 2015. Diesel fuel is responsible for 40% of air pollution in London.

Cars are even now responsible for more than half, 53 per cent, of all transport generated greenhouse gas emissions including particulates and the production of energy (oil refineries and power stations) for transport (DECC stats). In comparison, public transport produces only 6.7 per cent. Any increase in the production of greenhouse gases from cars increases the existing damage occurring from climate change such as floods and droughts throughout the world leading to the destruction of livelihoods and migration.

There are 1.1 million people in London who suffer from respiratory conditions and are vulnerable to unhealthy air pollution levels, according to the British Lung Foundation. High spikes in air pollution can also trigger heart attacks and permanently stunt the growth of children's lungs by up to 20 per cent.

Last year Kings College published a paper entitled 'Health Impacts of air pollution' which suggests 9,400 may have died prematurely in 2010 from exposure to Nitrogen Dioxide and PM2.5 particulates, primarily from diesel emissions.

The new Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, who suffers from adult onset asthma, says he is determined to cut air pollution. He has announced the introduction of a Toxicity Charge which will charge pre-Euro4 diesel vehicles (mostly registered before 2005) an additional £10 to enter the Congestion zone by 2017. He is also bringing forward and possibly expanding the ULEZ to Greater London. Meanwhile he is lobbying the Government for a new Clean Air Act which will control pollution from traffic. Experts say diesel will have to be banned from the streets of London to realistically bring air quality to WHO safe limits.

Electric vehicles are often referred to as 'zero-emission vehicles'. However in 2010 a Renault advert claiming its Electric vehicles were 'zero-emission' was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority. It was pointed out that a vehicle charged using energy sourced from the UK national grid would be majority coal and gas powered as renewables only make up a very small proportion of the Electric Grid, so just polluting somewhere else. There is also additional non-tailpipe air pollution caused by brake and tyre wear and production. As Jenny Bates of Friends of the Earth has commented, 'There is no such thing as a clean car'.

A University of Leeds report forecasts that driverless cars will lead to a substantial mode shift from public transport to cars. As the report acknowledges, this would lead to an increase in the use of energy despite improvements in the design of vehicles. Apart from the creation of more pollution and health problems there is also a consequence for people who don't drive.

60 per cent of people in this country do not have a car often because they cannot afford one. More women, members of BME groups, disabled, young and old and poor people are disadvantaged as a result wherever and whenever public transport is lacking or inadequate. Public transport is lacking or inadequate in most

rural areas, many suburban areas and towns where buses disappear in the evenings and on Sundays. Those without a car, the majority, are excluded from access to further education, employment, access to public and other services and many aspects of public and social activity. They are in fact discriminated against. Those most affected come within the scope of the Equality Act and of much human rights law.

There should be a right to public transport. It is as important to the majority of the population and to a normal modern life as access to

education and health services.

Safer London streets that are fit for humans require a significant reduction in traffic says 'Human Streets - The Mayors Vision for Cycling three years on'. In Oslo, car-free plans aim for 'as little as possible' motorised traffic, including electric cars, 'they just take up too much space'.

Of course minimising motorised traffic in London won't make money for the automobile industry but then again you never see broccoli being advertised on TV!

Rosalind Readhead and Margherita Rendel



Pedestrianising Oxford Street by 2020

Following Sadiq Khan's manifesto commitment that he would 'work with Westminster council, local businesses, Transport for London and taxis, to pedestrianise Oxford Street, Deputy Mayor Val Shawcross has lost no time in announcing that Oxford Street will be pedestrianised by 2020. Joe Irvin, CEO of Living Streets, which has been in the forefront of the campaign said: 'This is a brilliant start to transforming London into a world-leading walking city, improving the health of those living and working in it.'

At a recent meeting of the GLA Transport Committee there was general agreement that the present environment in Oxford Street is unacceptable citing congestion, safety and air quality. However many objections were raised to full pedestrianisation. Alex Williams, TfL's planning director, referred to the difficulties for finding terminating space for buses at each end of the street and suggested that there was a need to look at the entire bus network in central London. He suggested that Crossrail would make a reduction in bus numbers possible.

Richard Masset, chair of the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association, was concerned that the inability to use Oxford Street would inconvenience many people, particularly making it difficult for disabled people. Sir Peter Rogers, chairman of the New West End Company was concerned about congestion and air quality but did not favour full pedestrianisation. He wanted a 20 per cent per year reduction in bus numbers together with zero emission buses.

So whilst this commitment is welcome there is clearly a long way to go before a satisfactory solution to the present nightmare of Oxford Street is resolved.



The Boris legacy

After eight years of Boris Johnson we can look back on his influence on London's transport. What's he done right and what's he done wrong?

One of Johnson's first acts when he took office was to abolish the western extension of the congestion charge zone and scrap the plan to pedestrianise Parliament Square. It seemed that these acts signified the ending of restraints on the private car, characteristic of the Livingstone era, and indeed Johnson followed it up by abolishing the hierarchy of transport modes which put the use of the private car at the bottom.

Johnson's love for motor traffic seems confirmed by his championing of new roads, tunnels and bridges. New Lower Thames crossings are a continuation of Livingstone's proposals but a number of new tunnels includes an 18 kilometre tunnel linking the A40 at Park Royal to the A12

at Hackney Wick.

It could be said that Johnson had then redeemed himself by championing cycling. He took over Livingstone's bike hire scheme to be financed through an advertising deal with Barclays Bank. TfL estimated that the scheme would cost taxpayers £225m by 2015/16. Of this, Barclays was due to contribute £12m but in the event got away with just £5m. But his most visible legacy is the network of cycle superhighways which is due to be continued under Sadiq Khan.

Other Johnson schemes might best be described as vanity projects, expensive and quirky. First is the 'Boris bus'. Johnson looked back with nostalgia at the time when it was possible to jump on and off buses at traffic lights or even when moving, as one could do with the iconic Routemaster.

The new ones cost almost twice as much as a conventional double decker. Their open rear

doors have had to be guarded by an additional member of staff whose jobs it is to defeat Johnson's intention to allow passengers to jump on and off. It is now announced that these additional members of staff will be dispensed with and, in future, the rear doors will remain closed except when the bus is standing at a stop, just like any other bus. It is noteworthy that no other operator has shown any interest in buying these expensive red elephants.

The Emirates Airline cable car across the Thames is another problematic project. Originally intended to be entirely funded by private finance, it finally cost £60m of which Emirates contributed £36m. To boost its disappointing patronage it is now suggested that it be turned into a night club in the air.

Finally there is the Garden Bridge with a design won without competition by Thomas Heatherwick, coincidentally the same architect who won the design for the Boris bus. The concept is mired in controversy. A critical objection is that, although open to the public, it will remain a private space subject to any rules which the owner cares to impose. Although private, £60m worth of public money has been allocated to it; £30m from the GLA by courtesy of Johnson and £30m from the treasury. Whilst not formally opposing the bridge Sadiq Khan has ruled that no more public money should be spent pending a review.

This is a period when positive steps need to be taken to wean people off cars. Apart from the cycle schemes Johnson has not contributed to this project.

Chris Barker

Putting South London on the tube map

For over 70 years there have been various proposals to extend the Bakerloo line from its existing southern terminus at the Elephant and Castle to Peckham.

This proposal has never materialised, in part because of difficulties in tunnelling through South London's clay and sandy soils, higher priority being given to other projects such as the Victoria Line and more recently the extension of the Northern Line to Battersea Power Station. However, the need to regenerate Peckham, along with other parts of South London, is self-evident.

With the completion of Crossrail 1 (the Elizabeth line) within the next few years there will be significant spare capacity on the Bakerloo line across its central section – Paddington to Elephant and Castle. This will be the only existing tube line in central London with significant spare capacity and this fact focuses attention on the need to extend the Bakerloo line into South London as a priority.

At present planners are looking at an extension of the Bakerloo line from the Elephant and Castle to Lewisham and possibly over the national rail line to Hayes although a branch towards Peckham and Crystal Palace could also be considered. Conventional deep level tunnelling is both highly expensive and takes a considerable time to construct but new methods have resolved many issues. It should be possible to use up to date cut and cover construction for the majority of the route, running mainly through publicly owned land with negligible disturbance to existing buildings and businesses. Other parts could exploit the remarkable legacy of abandoned Victorian infrastructure across South London such as has been instrumental in creating such schemes as the Docklands Light Railway, the highly successful Overground network and, currently, the Metropolitan Line re-routing via the Croxley link, to Watford Junction.

Major redevelopment opportunities for housing and economic growth across South London would be facilitated by improvements in the transport network. Indeed, with the improvements to connectivity these opportunities will spread much further across the South East and in addition reduce the increasing pressure on the current over stretched national rail services provided by South Eastern and Southern services. They are all achievable on a cost-effective basis, and would enhance the overall effectiveness of the transport infrastructure in South London.

Peter Cox and Alastair Hanton

Better interchanges

On 2nd June London TravelWatch held a seminar on transport interchanges. The issue had been addressed in a TravelWatch report in July 2015. Three themes were highlighted:

- That passengers can change seamlessly from one mode of transport to another, there is level access from bus to street to platform to train floor; navigating within and around the station is easy to do; and there is sufficient room for movement even in the busiest periods of the day,
- Where signs are needed, they are of good quality, in the right places, clearly visible,

Passengers feel safe in and around the interchange.

- The seminar included a contribution from Natalie Doig from the RNIB who stressed the importance of considering the needs of blind and partially sighted people in the designs of stations and interchanges. She also said that there should be a greater availability of tactile maps.



NEWS ROUNDUP

Bus users or cyclists

A report from bus lobby group Greener Journeys documents recent deterioration in bus speeds in London. This is due, says author David Begg, to a number of factors including economic recovery, roadworks, the rising number of delivery vans and private hire vehicles – driven by Uber – and the construction of the cycle super highways.

Begg is critical of former mayor, Boris Johnson, for going ahead with the cycle super highways without at the same time taking steps to reduce traffic volumes. The resulting congestion particularly hits bus users. He suggests that this bias is a result of a powerful, white, middle class cycling lobby skewing investment in their favour against predominantly poorer bus passengers.

Sadiq Khan has said he will 'learn from previous [cycling] schemes' when making decisions on those schemes which have not yet been implemented.

Second thoughts on Crossrail 2

About 47 percent of national rail passengers transfer to London Underground or Docklands Light Railway services on arrival at their central London rail terminus. So says the March report of the National Infrastructure Commission, Review of the Case for Large scale Transport Investment in London. Taking its cue from the Paris RER system, the report suggests that more main line trains should be diverted from their termini and linked across London. Already St Pancras is linked with Blackfriars through Thameslink and soon Liverpool Street will be linked with Paddington through Crossrail. This leaves a number of termini untouched.

Two suggestions might make the regional concept of Crossrail 2 redundant. One is to extend the Moorgate Northern City line via Cannon Street to Waterloo using a proposed fifth track between Waterloo and Clapham Junction. Another is to extend an enhanced Lea Valley line via Stratford and the Isle of Dogs to join the Brighton Main Line. Crossrail 2, it is suggested, might then revert to being a metro line linking Wimbledon with New Southgate.

Floating bus stops

How can cyclists get around bus stops? One solution is to route the cycle lane around the back of the bus stop, effectively making the bus stop an island between the road and the cycle lane. This successfully keeps cyclists away from the traffic but, Transport for All claims, creates a hazard for pedestrians, particularly pedestrians with disabilities, who have to cross the cycle lane when accessing the stop or alighting from a bus.

Transport for All is asking TfL to monitor the six sites where floating bus stops are in use and to stop building more bus stop bypasses till the results of this are known. They are particularly concerned about a proposed floating bus stop outside St Thomas's Hospital and on 28th June organised a protest to mark the launch of legal action against TfL's proposals.

Dealing with London's toxic air

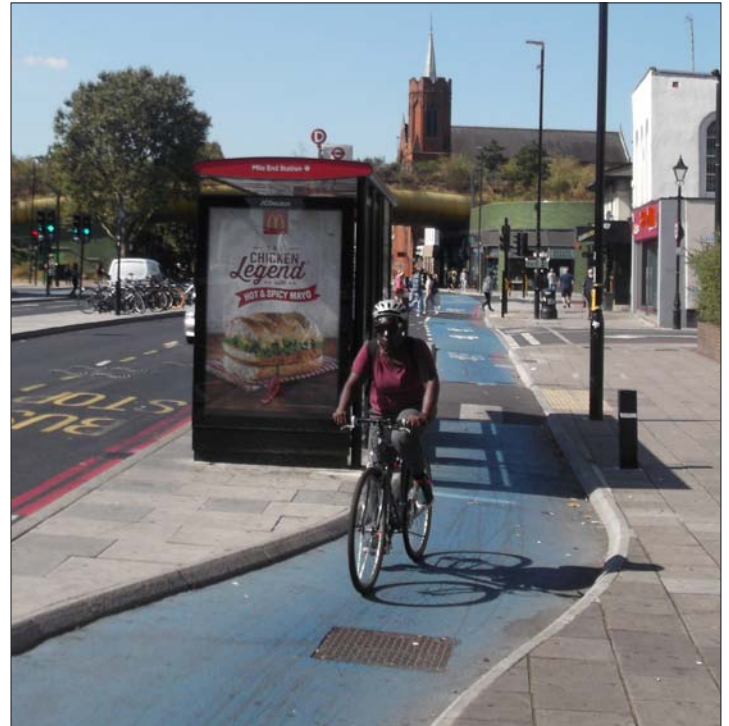
Simon Birkett, director of Clean Air London has praised Sadiq Khan for his action plan to battle London's toxic air. His plan, says Birkett, 'contrasts strongly with Boris Johnson's who bought us 1,000 "vanity buses", championed "car is king" policies and was found guilty of public health fraud on an industrial scale'.

Birkett is, however, concerned that Khan is proposing to charge (and not ban) diesel vehicles and may not make the so-called ultra low emission zone (ULEZ) bigger until September 2020. He says 'that it is mathematically impossible for London to comply with WHO guidelines for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) until 2025 or beyond unless all diesel vehicles are banned from the most-polluted places'.

He also calls for toxic pollution from private hire vehicles (PHVs) and licensed taxis to be tackled. He wants the exemption from the congestion charge for all PHVs to be scrapped in 2017 since they do not guarantee accessibility as taxis do. He wants all taxis to be zero emission by 2018.

Protest against Southern

On 10th August CBT teamed up with the Association of British Commuters to organise a march from Victoria to the Department of Transport to make three demands on Southern Railway:



LISTEN to passengers. Alongside a senior manager from Southern and a Union official, attend a Passenger Assembly we will organise, and answer questions directly!

FREEZE FARES for Southern customers from January for one year. COMPENSATE Southern customers to make up for the 15% decrease in services.

Investigation into traffic congestion

The London Assembly's Transport Committee has held an investigation into traffic congestion in London, examining what the Mayor and Transport for London can do to reduce congestion.

The Assembly says that 'Following a long period of relative stability, London's roads have been getting busier and more congested for at least the last two years. Average traffic speed has fallen, as has journey time reliability on London's main roads. Excess waiting times for buses has increased.' The consequences include harm to London's economy, increasing air pollution and a threat to road safety.

They list some of the causes of these trends. There have been increases in the number of delivery vans and minicabs whilst at the same time capacity has been reallocated to pedestrians and cyclists. Construction work has constrained space further across the road network.

The closing date for contributing to the investigation was 2nd September.

Terminating HS2 at Old Oak Common

Sustainable transport campaigner Stephen Plowden argues that the case against Old Oak Common as a terminal for HS2 has not been properly evaluated.

He says: The present plan is for the HS2 London terminus to be at Euston with a stop at Old Oak Common, where there will also be a Crossrail connection providing very quick access to central London and Canary Wharf. If the terminus were changed to Old Oak Common, those travellers for whom Euston would be a more convenient interchange would suffer a time penalty. The number of these travellers has been exaggerated, and for most of them the penalty would be small.

No attempt has been made to compare these penalties to the net savings in costs of all kinds (resources, social and environmental) that would be achieved by not bringing the line east of Old Oak Common, but there is every reason to think that these savings would be much greater, even allowing for the extra costs that would be incurred at Old Oak Common to make it the terminus rather than a stop. The argument that the Crossrail connection from Old Oak Common to central London would not have enough capacity cannot be substantiated.