

London's rail city of the future



*This is an artist's impression of the new city that could grow up in west London thanks to Crossrail and High Speed Two, as it might look in 2043
Picture Greater London Authority (Old Oak: A Vision for the Future)*

The creation of a new station at Old Oak Common to serve Crossrail, High Speed Two and the Overground could become the Canary Wharf of West London, it is predicted. The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham first asked architects Terry Farrell and Partners to create a vision for regeneration. The benefits and costs of the station will be shared between HS2, Network Rail, Transport for London, Crossrail, train operators on the Great Western and West Coast main line, the freight operators and the Department for Transport. The Old Oak Common super hub is expected to lead to 19,000 new homes and 90,000 new jobs.

<http://www.londonreconnections.com/2013/old-oak-common-a-vision-and-a-challenge-for-crossrail-part-1/>

Five-year rail plan approved but Regulator also wants cash cuts

Network Rail's ambitious five-year plan for the period starting next year is currently undergoing the scrutiny of the public and their official representatives. Railfuture is impatient for improvements to be carried out as soon as possible but the officials are examining the plans to see if they are realistic and "value for money". The latest official body to give its verdict is the Office for Rail Regulation which issued its "draft determination" on 12 June 2013 for Control Period 6. The ORR has been casting its critical eye over Network Rail's strategic business plan since January. After nearly

Railfuture press releases

<http://tinyurl.com/bt4nqtl>

Railfuture responses

<http://tinyurl.com/nanzdk5>

What's on

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six months of consideration, the ORR said Network Rail should cut its £21 billion spending plan by £2 billion. It says new technology, better management and more efficient ways of working are needed. Because passenger numbers and rail freight are expected to continue to grow, the ORR approved a £12 billion programme of enhancements, but it wants to see £7 billion worth of provisional plans fully developed before it backs them completely. The ORR's draft is open for consultation until 4 September 2013. Its "final determination" will be published on 31 October 2013.

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/pr13/consultations/draft-determination.php

Six companies battling to run London's Docklands Light Railway

Four organisations are bidding to operate the Docklands Light Railway franchise when the franchise of the current operator, Serco, runs out in September next year. Transport for London says Serco is being challenged by 1 Stagecoach Rail Projects; 2 A joint venture between Keolis UK; 3 A joint venture between Go Ahead and Colas Rail. The DLR carried a record 100 million passengers in the 2012-13 financial year, which included the London 2012 Olympic Games.

www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/archive/27761.aspx

Network Rail invites comments on its its long-term planning ideas

Network Rail issued its draft market studies for London and the South East, regional urban services and freight as part of its long-term planning for the next 30 years. The study for long distance passenger services was issued a month earlier in March. The consultation period ended on 26 July 2013.

www.networkrail.co.uk/improvements/planning-policies-and-plans/long-term-planning-process/market-studies

MPs cast doubts on European Rail Package's liberalisation plans



The House of Commons transport select committee considered the European Commission's proposed 4th Railway Package and found that it focuses too much on liberalisation of domestic railway systems at the expense of measures to improve cross border passenger and freight services. While giving the proposals a broad welcome, the committee is concerned

about governance arrangements for Eurotunnel, a proposed maximum annual threshold for franchises which could prevent British companies bidding for overseas contracts, and that the European Union could have responsibility for specifying the content of public transport plans. It urged the British Government to negotiate to ensure that joint working between Network Rail and train operators is not unduly restricted, that metro and light railway systems are not drawn into the requirement to separate infrastructure and operations, and that the British arrangements for letting franchises cannot be challenged under the package.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/439/439.pdf

HS1's Nicola Shaw joins the Government's franchise advisory panel

Membership of the advisory panel to advise on and oversee all aspects of the rail franchise programme was announced by Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin. In addition to former Eurostar chairman Richard Brown, who carried out the review on franchising last year, the members are High Speed One chief executive Nicola Shaw,

Positive moves on Uckfield-Lewes

Railfuture welcomed the statement by Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin in May that Network Rail should examine the case for reopening the line between Uckfield and Lewes in order to help meet the increasing demand for rail travel between London and the Sussex coast. A report on travel needs in the area by JCR has been commissioned by Railfuture and will be made available to the review.

<http://tinyurl.com/qh78p5o>

<http://tinyurl.com/o2axmf7>

Railfuture and new Surrey rail strategy

Railfuture Surrey and rail user groups in the county have responded to the draft Surrey County Council rail strategy. This can be seen on the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/ol3npxg>

Stephen Paine of UBS Investment Bank, Martin Buck of Crossrail and Michael Holden of Directly Operated Railways.

www.gov.uk/government/policy-advisory-groups/rail-franchise-advisory-panel

Legal move for Tube extension to Battersea power station

Transport for London submitted a Transport and Works Act Order in April to cover the construction and operation of an extension of the Charing Cross branch of the Northern line from Kennington to the Battersea Power Station development site. The proposal includes an intermediate station at Nine Elms which should relieve pressure on the Victoria line at Vauxhall.

www.tfl.gov.uk/nle

Bombardier coaches for longer trains on London Overground

Transport for London placed an order for 57 new carriages with Bombardier in May to enable trains to be lengthened from four to five carriages on most of its network. The first five-car trains are expected to be introduced on the East London Line at the end of next year.

www.tfl.gov.uk/static/corporate/media/newscentre/archive/17069.html

Metro and regional options for London's proposed Crossrail 2

Network Rail and Transport for London are carrying out a consultation on routes for Crossrail 2, at this stage largely for route safeguarding purposes. Two options are presented. The Metro option is for a new underground line from Alexandra Palace in north east London to Wimbledon in the south west, largely building on the long established Chelsea-Hackney line plans. The regional option would extend this by linking to and incorporating existing rail lines over a wider area into Hertfordshire and Surrey. The consultation period closes on 2 August 2013.

www.crossrail2.co.uk

Immediate reaction to watchdog's doubt on Thameslink



The National Audit Office has published its assessment of the progress of the Thameslink programme. The first phase of the infrastructure work was completed on time and £143 million under budget. However, the successful completion of the programme depends on synchronising completion of the infrastructure, availability of new trains and the letting of the new franchise. The report pointed out that the estimated £16 billion contract for new trains is currently delayed by over three years and this has implications both for Thameslink itself and for other areas on the network where the existing Thameslink trains will be deployed after refurbishment. In terms echoing the NAO findings on the West Coast main line franchise debacle, the report questions whether the Department for Transport underestimated the scale of the work, time, skills and resources it needed to negotiate such a complex private finance deal. The NAO report was closely followed by an announcement

Legal barrier lifted for Oxford-Bicester

A High Court application for a judicial review of the Government's approval of work required by Chiltern Railways to operate a service from Oxford to London Marylebone via Bicester was rejected on 7 May 2013. The upgrading of the line will also be a first step towards the East West link. It will include a new parkway station at Water Orton north of Oxford and rebuilding Bicester Town station. Work can now start this year, although it will involve the temporary suspension of the existing service early next year.

<http://tinyurl.com/owyxsgb>

European Passengers Federation

The annual report and transcript of the presentations given at the European Passengers Federation conference held in Basel on 15-16 March 2013 are available on their website.

www.epf.eu

by the department on 14 June 2013 confirming that a contract with Siemens for new trains would be going ahead.

www.nao.org.uk/report/progress-in-delivering-the-thameslink-programme/
www.gov.uk/government/news/thameslink-deal-close-to-completion

European Commission calls for lower Channel Tunnel charges

The European Commission has called on the British and French governments to look into the Eurotunnel pricing structure and to comply with European Union rules against excessive track access charges. The commission is concerned that high prices are passed on to passengers and deter freight operators from using the Tunnel, which is operating at only 57% of capacity. The EC is also concerned that the regulator, the Intergovernmental Commission, has inadequate powers and is insufficiently independent.

europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-557_en.htm

HS2 action despite propaganda campaign against it



The National Audit Office published a report on the early stages of the programme for High Speed Two on 16 May 2013. It expressed concern that the Department for Transport had inadequately expressed the need for a strategic development in rail capacity and the way in which HS2 will help generate economic growth. It considered that the economic case was stronger for

the complete Y shaped railway but, because the route of phase 2 was less advanced, there was a high level of uncertainty. The report notes that the cost of phase 1 will become clearer as the plans are developed but estimated that there remained a funding gap of £3.3 billion over four years (2017-18 to 2020-21) that the Government had not decided how to fund.

www.nao.org.uk/report/high-speed-2-a-review-of-early-programme-preparation



The legal processes required for HS2 are under way. The HS2 hybrid bill was announced in the Queen's Speech and is likely to be introduced in October. In advance of this, the high speed rail (preparation) bill, which provides commitment to fund the project, has been introduced into the House of Commons. It was during the second reading on 26 June 2013, immediately

following the Chancellor's public expenditure statement, that Transport Minister Simon Burns announced an increase in estimated total expenditure of £4.6 billion plus £7.5 billion for the trains.

www.politics.co.uk/reference/hs2-hybrid-bill/



Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin announced the formal safeguarding of the HS2 route between London and Birmingham on 9 July 2013. This will prevent developments that would affect the route and also enable people living near the route to approach the Government to purchase their properties under blight order procedures.

www.gov.uk/government/news/hs2-safeguarded-in-major-step-forward-for-scheme

The formal public consultation on the HS2 phase 2 route was launched a week later, on 17 July 2013. Responses are required by the end of January 2014 and there will be public information events during the autumn. The Government also announced an interim compensation scheme for property owners adversely affected by the proposals. Information on both can be downloaded from the following link. Railfuture will be responding to the consultation.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/high-speed-rail-update-on-phase-2

Wisbech reopening petition

Railfuture East Anglia chairman Peter Wakefield led a delegation to Cambridgeshire County Council on 18 July 2013, calling for their support and action in reopening the railway line from Wisbech to March with services continuing to Cambridge. The petition had been signed by over 2,900 Cambridgeshire residents, by 500 people living just across the county boundary in Norfolk as well as others from further afield. The campaign is aiming for the new service to be included in the next Greater Anglia franchise to be let in October 2016

<http://wisbechrail.org.uk>

Commons transport select committee future programme

The House of Commons transport select committee has announced the topics that it will be considering in the forthcoming session. Those related to rail transport include:

- Passenger transport in isolated communities
- Local decision making on transport expenditure
- Policing the railway

<http://tinyurl.com/no95sf8>

Government spending review for general election year

Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne made his well publicised spending round statement for 2015-16, the financial year which will include the next general election. The announcement on 26 June 2013 included £3.2 billion for the Department for Transport's programme and administration budget, a reduction of 9.5% on that planned for the preceding year. The overall 2015-16 capital budget for the DfT is planned to increase by 5.6% to £9.5 billion.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-round-2013-documents

This was followed by the publication of more detailed information on the Government's medium term plans between 2015 and 2021 for capital expenditure, "Investing in Britain's Infrastructure". Within the transport sector this includes expenditure on HS2 rising from £832 million to £4498 million, for Network Rail rising from £3546 million to £3850 million and for London Transport investment from £925 million to £1007 million. At the same time the capital budget for the highways Agency will rise from £1496m to £3764m. Most of the sum available to Network Rail is for projects already underway or announced, including Crossrail, Thameslink, the Northern Hub, Oxford-Bedford and electrification. In addition, the electrification of the Gospel Oak-Barking line got the go ahead, it was announced that the Government was asking Network Rail to investigate electrifying the line from Oxenholme to Windermere and £2 million to fund a detailed study of potential funding for Crossrail 2.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/investing-in-britains-future

Passengers not so happy with rail, according to national survey

Passenger Focus published its spring 2013 national passenger survey on 28 June. This showed a drop in passenger satisfaction from 83 to 82% compared to last year. Satisfaction with individual train operators varied from 76% to 95%. The biggest gainer was Greater Anglia with a rise from 73 to 77%, while London Midland dropped from 87 to 80%. Satisfaction is studied for all train operators on all aspects of the journey as well as facilities at stations and on trains so the detailed information has great value for rail campaigners. Both the full report and a summary overview for England, Scotland and Wales are available.

www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/publications/national-passenger-survey-at-a-glance-great-britain-wide-spring-2013

Some West Anglia services to be devolved in London



Transport for London

Transport announced on 2 July 2013. The change is likely to take place in 2015 and will cover the services from Liverpool Street to Chingford, Enfield Town and Cheshunt (via Seven Sisters), currently run by Greater Anglia. It will involve handing over responsibility for 23 stations. The Railfuture-affiliated Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users Group welcomed the news, and is hoping the Mayor's pledge to replicate the success of the Overground will be made good.

www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/28301.aspx

Cash allocated to local transport bodies

The funding allocations to local transport bodies for local major transport projects were confirmed on 16 July 2013. For most of England, excluding London, these are for the period 2015-16 to 2018-19 and range from £7.7 million for Worcestershire to £65.9 million for the South East, which includes Essex, Kent and a large part of East Sussex. In four areas, West of England, West

Rail Safety

In many respects railways in Britain are the safest in Europe, said the Office of Rail Regulation in its annual review of safety, published on 17 July 2013. The ORR however found room for improvement in the safety of track workers and those working on rail construction sites and passengers on stations and platforms. The occupational health of staff and questions of fatigue were also a concern. It also repeated its call for Network Rail to have a better understanding of structures such as bridges and tunnels so that maintenance can be planned in a way to improve both resilience and safety.

<http://tinyurl.com/pnnbvn8>

On the same day, the House of Commons Transport Committee launched an enquiry into safety at level crossings. This will include a consideration of the adequacy of legislation, regulation and resources and also the potential for improving public awareness. Written submissions are required by 16 September 2013, before oral evidence is taken in the autumn.

<http://tinyurl.com/nkdn27o>

Yorkshire and York, Sheffield City Region and Greater Manchester, in which LTBs were already established under city deal programmes, the confirmed funding is extended until 2020-21 with indicative levels given for the following three years. LTBs, which go under a variety of names and are based on the areas of Local Enterprise Partnerships, should have prepared their initial prioritisation of schemes by the end of July.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/local-transport-body-funding-allocations

Smart Ticketing

Passenger Focus is carrying out a study of passenger requirements in the introduction of smart ticketing. The first report, "Smart Ticketing - what passengers want" was published on 9 July 2013 and calls for systems to be operated for the benefit of passengers rather than for the administrative convenience of the operators. In particular it should offer value for money, convenience, simplicity, security, flexibility and be capable of being tailored to individual needs as well as at the leading edge of technology. Further

reports on the subject will be issued.

www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/publications/smart-ticketing-what-rail-passengers-want-july-2013

Franchising - the Government's response to the Brown Review

On 10 July 2013, the Government published its considered response to the Brown review of the franchise system that was published at the beginning of the year. This includes the measures that have already been taken, including publishing a revised timetable for future franchise renewals and strengthening management and systems within the DfT. A rail franchising overview document will be published later in 2013, which follows a franchise competition guide that was issued in June. The latter and the Government's response can both be downloaded from the following link

www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-brown-review-of-the-rail-franchising-programme

And finally ... Support for Witney tram train link

The Witney Chamber of Commerce is reported to be supporting the proposals from Railfuture Thames Valley for a tram train service between Oxford, Carterton and Witney, calling on the county council to carry out a feasibility study. Their support is welcome.

www.witneygazette.co.uk/news/10513930.Call_for_tram_trains_link_to_cut_jams_on_A40_in_west_oxfordshire

Kenilworth and others gain from New Stations Fund

The Government launched the New Stations Fund at the beginning of the year to provide funding towards the cost of shovel-ready station opening projects. In May it was announced that money from the fund would be made available for Ilkeston in Derbyshire, Lea Bridge in East London on the Lea Valley line, Newcourt between Exeter and Exmouth and Pye Corner between Newport and Ebbw Vale. All of these can be used by existing services as soon as they are available. In July Kenilworth was added to the list with a contribution of £5 million. The new station will be integrated into the project to improve capacity on the line between Coventry and Leamington. Most of these projects have been the subject of Railfuture campaigns and support.

<http://tinyurl.com/offumu8>

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