

English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)

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ERTA London-wide Pamphlet of ideas, schemes and other suggestions to be worked up by whosoever agrees!



Caption Left: Cannon Street Station circa 2000's in all its elegance. Pandemic apart, over the last 55 years the railways and indeed, land transport in particular has gone from the decline and cuts of the 1960's to booms of the 1980's-2010's and now a recovery hopefully. Usually, our transport is bursting at the seams and whilst modern technology like Zoom is now more vogue, physical commuting, travelling and meeting for whatever purpose will means we need to build-in capacity, reduce congestion hot spots and enhance the reach, range and vision we have for modal shift especially as the awareness of a Climate Emergency dawns on ever-increasing audiences.

Introduction: This pamphlet is to give a taster of our London agenda, planting our ideas for what we believe could be invaluable improvements which should be picked up by professionals, worked up, properly objectively evaluated and where suitable, implemented in a timely manner. There is a need to save land and keep options open. To that end, modal shift to rail-based solutions is the 21st Century answer to many 20th Century roads and rubber-based problems which have been allowed to exacerbate and linger, informing 20th Century political expediency like Silvertown Tunnels, which will solve nothing but signal more road traffic, congestion and pollution. We call on the London Assembly and the Elected Mayor to think again and make it a rail tunnel with footpath and cycle way instead.

Schemes we would like to see advanced (not exhaustive list either):

- 1. All London's suburban rail services must be devolved to TfL (London Overground) as soon as possible:** This is laudable from the viewpoint of public dealing with one entity rather than multiple and that one entity focused on quality of usership, inclusive design integratedly now as well as expansion and ever more growth and diversity. Interestingly enough, TfL regard themselves as London constrained than expansion beyond M25 for example it seems. Thus, example of the **Croxley Link** (<http://www.croxleyrailink.com/>); whereby a wish to rebuild a missing link to enable Metropolitan services to run into Watford Junction bay platforms for interchange purposes was declined as a TfL project and deferred to Hertfordshire within whose boundary it was concerned with. Partnership and shared cost could be one way forward and combining the distinctive natures of the two entities for best results seems to allude and so nothing has happened on the project for a number of years. This is a pity as the benefits of better choice and joined-up integrated transport lend themselves to this sort of expansion, whereby London's reaches and ranges combined to adjoining areas which are becoming increasingly urbanised, need better public transport, choices and options.
- 2. Better integration of London's suburban rail with TfL bus, tube and tram services, including new and improved interchanges with these services:** Again, integration makes sense, but how, like the Swiss and other exemplified countries do we get buses to arrive within good time of a rail departure and leave within a reasonable time afterwards? How do we ensure we get the right type of bus or train or tram for the audiences using it? Overcrowding in normal times is not unknown, what 'now and then' relief can we bring to a table beyond seeking to manage peak and off-peak usage through fare increases or reductions? We want choice, we want better value for money and above all, a system which incorporates disabled people and their needs as well. Access, information, access to toilets at key locations as a right not a cost-benefit consideration is where new thinking and consultative inclusion is warranted. Making our transport safe, day and night and retention of walk-on, walk-off usage, not just pre-book airline styles.
- 3. Chessington Line extension to Leatherhead including station for Chessington World of Adventures:** Useful link, better access and more capacity for diverse rail services.
- 4. Crossrail 1 East-West:** Crossrail is happening like it or not. Delayed, over budget yet the scope and scale commands a certain respect and once running will in all probability be well used. Will link Old Oak Common with Heathrow and City of London.
- 5. Crossrail 2 [SW-NE]:** This project is currently on hold, but again connects tube and trains with cross London access and outlets and will again provide capacity and choice.
- 6. Double-track Frimley Green – Ash Vale:** This would boost the number of trains able to go each way and thus enhance potential services. Promotion of using local lines to encourage patronage especially off-peak would bolster their ability to provide alternatives to presumption of the car for mobility more.

7. Extend Docklands Light Railway from the Bank to Clapham Junction and also the Tottenham – Moorgate lines: Could they be made to extended loops either Moorgate to London Bridge and beyond or loop and back to Essex Road via Aldwych for example? There are gaps in the tube network and surface transport gets slowed in congestion. e a variation on a theme.

8. Extend LU lines:

a. **Edgware – Stanmore-Watford:** Would have to be in tunnels and sub-surface interfaces. Much of old trajectory route developed over. Needs a critical study as to what may be feasible.

b. **High Barnet-Napsbury-St Albans Abbey/Watford Branch links:** This should be studied in conjunction with NR's southern east-west rail link idea and integrated. The line could be extended in a fashion, be it above surface or tunnel or combination. It could go over or under M25 with Parkway Stations and integrate with the new east-west southern link. Napsbury new station and via a duck under, go on to link into a resuscitated second bay platform at St Albans Abbey for example.

c. **Cockfosters – Potters Bar:** This idea may mean tunnelling and sub-surface accesses integrating with existing stations and Potters Bar for outer suburban services going north and more relief/choices coming into London including of course direct access to North London and bus networks, rather than driving or going in and coming out which takes time, costs more and this idea would free up seats and reduce overcrowding in normal times on other services.

d. **Bakerloo Extension to Lewisham:** This relatively new scheme is a welcome addition if delivered and LRT development right across south London should also be developed and cascade buses to busy routes to strengthen them, capacity and timetables enabling more.

9. Gospel Oak-Barking line (GOB) services integrated more with existing London services: The proposed extension to Barking Riverside is good, but other considerations using same tracks including running onto the lines to Grays and beyond and vice versa. Likewise, at the western end, running via the Carlton Road Junction Tunnels into a new western flank platform/crossover platform interface at West Hampstead Thameslink could bring more benefits again in the making of interchanges outside the inner London areas and distributing usage more evenly. Gospel Oak, but for the busy North London Line, is a bit out on a limb and integrating with Thameslink for example could bring x2-way benefits and fresh vitality. That GOB network should extend eastwards to Barking Riverside and Abbey Wood via a Thames Tunnel. That GOB network should extend westwards to West Hampstead -Dudding Hill – Acton – Kew Bridge -Heathrow.



Caption Above: Like most towns, cities and radials, London has its fair share of congestion and as a result is subject to emissions of stand-still exhausts.



Caption Above: West Ealing, London, with M4 over-bridge in background. Roads have intruded the heart and soul of London but delivered pollution and more traffic too.

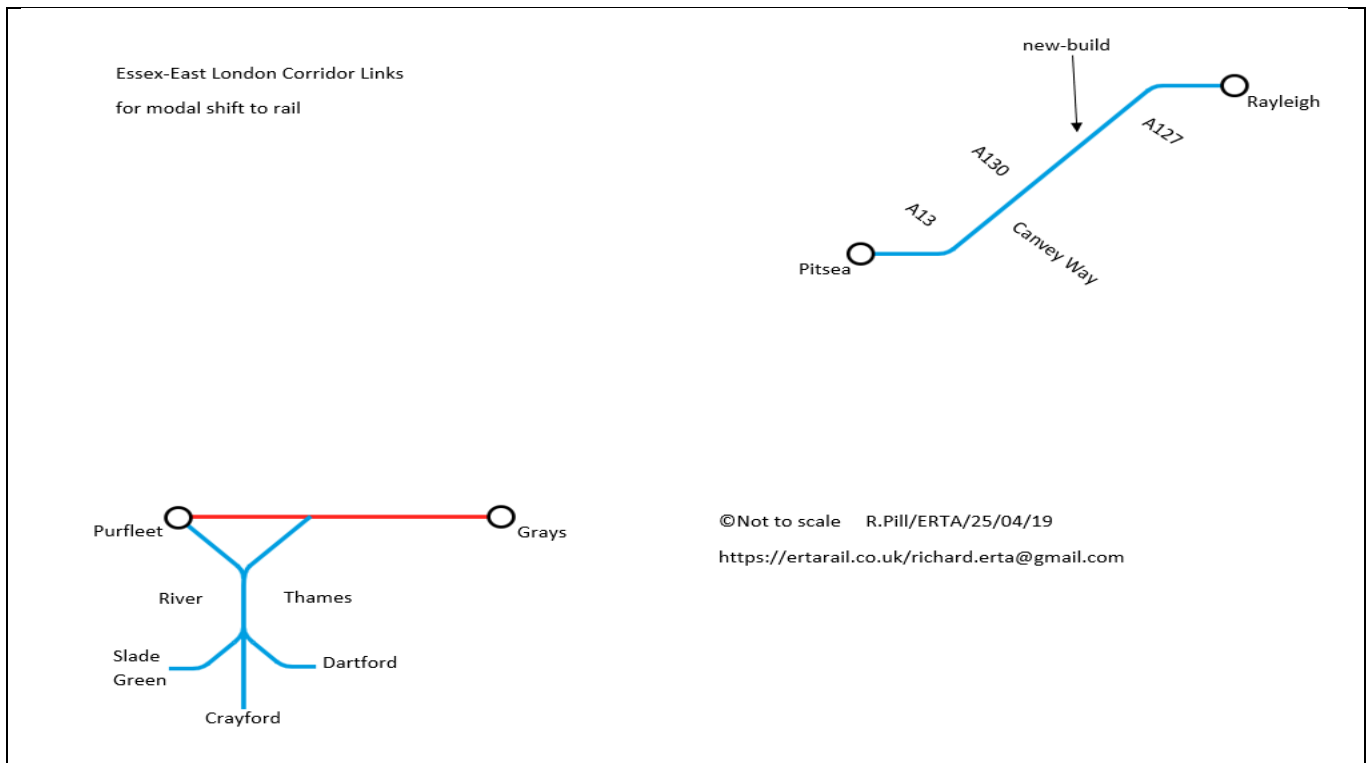
10. **Heathrow Rail Links:** West Hampstead and Dudding Hill Lines could inform Gospel Oak – West Hampstead-Heathrow and also a direct outer suburban service (new) from Luton – Heathrow and/or onwards to Reading ‘South Chiltern Link’.

11. **Heathrow Southern Railway:** We support the Southern Heathrow Rail Link from Woking to Heathrow provided it is extended to Old Oak Common (OOC) and onwards via tunnel/new build to link with the Chiltern Main Line for an Aylesbury-Heathrow-Guildford ‘outer M25 West London arc railway for passenger and potentially freight by rail also (away from most residential areas). <https://heathrowrail.com/>

12. **Improved pedestrian access between Dorking West/Dorking Deepdene:** This is laudable and some detail on exactly how would be welcome. Quick access from London to North Downs.

13. **Light Rapid Transits should be allowed to grow organically via local planning systems** in North/South/East/West/Central London e. g. Croydon Tram link - extend to Crystal Palace and Sydenham/link with suburban stations both sides of the hill.

14. **London Orbital Railways:** The lack of orbital rail links around east and west London for enabling through traffic from the radial rest of the country get to and from the South-East, South Coast and the Channel Tunnel. It is time to look at Tonbridge-Redhill with a southern curve to Gatwick direct and thence via Three Bridges, Crawley and Horsham, reinstate to Guildford and Shalford for loop and radial links with Reading, Oxford and the East-West Rail Network.



Caption Above: ERTA believes that more Thames tunnels should be rail, not road-based with walking and cycle access built in. Our suggestion would allow two-way flows between South London and Essex ‘not via central London’ but direct. Land use and keeping options open is essential, which is where strategic realisation, planning and suitable nurturing policies come to the fore.

15. **Muswell Hill Metro:** Laudable scheme to reinstate a rail service to the area and Alexandra Palace inclusively. Needs better rail access and ideally reinstate the tube to it as well. <http://muswellhillmetrogroup.com/>

16. **New platforms Willesden Junction Low Level** for London Midland and Southern services, thereby enabling interchange with North London Line, West London Line and London Transport (TFL) Bakerloo Line.

17. **New rail link Southend Airport – Rayleigh/Pitsea-Woolwich/South London radials.** This would intersect A13, A130, A1245/ Stations could provide better rail access, reach and ranges both ways. Linking Southend with the Norwich line without having to go into London and change, would save time and energy and feed both ways footfall and spend more.

18. **New station Old Oak Common (interchange Crossrail 1/HS2/West London Line);** it must be built before HS2 begins. It must incorporate Heathrow Links and a tunnel for direct link with Chiltern Main Line and vice versa running. Ideally Heathrow would have a multi-purpose underground station built able to accommodate and share services radial to Guildford via Woking, Chiltern Main Line, Feltham lines with Waterloo and South London direct in mind and Reading as well as the Windsor Link. The play-off of one versus the other is shallow and self-defeating, as we need properly planned, coordinated and integrated rail-based public transport, not fragments, winners and losers. There must be common access of tracks, not segregational or ‘our own tracks and no share’ sort of arrangements.



Caption Above: The stark 'box' of Luton's Car Park stack deals with security and capacity in one go as well as utilising limited land space. Like it or loathe it, it is functional. Luton is a growing population and needs better links.



Caption Above: M25 orbital road is a major milestone of achievement, but its success means more traffic, more congestion as elsewhere. We need public transport alternatives which work and add up.

19. **New station on London Overground North London Line at North Acton** (interchange with LT Central Line and possibly Crossrail 1, adjacent Chiltern and First Great Western Services).

20. **New station on London Overground West London Line at Battersea.**

21. **North Downs Line:** To be or not to be a. electrification and b. better integration, c. direct curve onto the Cranleigh line for Horsham looping back via Gatwick to Redhill and vice versa subject to capacity pathing issues. Guildford-Thameslink direct running from Redhill off East Croydon. Reading-Redhill utilisation of electric stock, avoids diesels in an otherwise electric area context? Some locals and industry operator figures seem mixed or against electrification or third rail v overhead for example. Currently nothing is moving very fast it seems and the line is possibly under-utilised.

22. **Re-open Bank-Aldwych (closed for sake of new lifts!) and old Fleet Line to Charing Cross:** needs updating, planning with City of London Corporation, TFL and others now, and what of new development like Crossrail does it scupper it or could conventional rail and LRT fill gaps in the network?

23. **Sites close to railway lines offering potential locations for rail freight terminals and logistics centres** must be protected from alternative transport proposals these include disused railways and rail sidings: Identify, list more and a reliable volunteer to work up cases.



Caption Above: Shows the two lines which ERTA believes should have platforms at West Hampstead Thameslink Station. Trains from Gospel Oak to Heathrow and Reading could connect here, making more for more.



Caption Above: A Southern Train at East Croydon, a growing south London area and busy rail interchange. ERTA has long called for direct running via Redhill for Guildford and possibly Reading with electrification.

24. **Thames Tunnel Grays – Dartford** (Lower Thames River Crossing scheme), built to HS1 standards, to include Crossrail 1 extension and cater for freight between ports and Channel Tunnel. Must be a rail project mainly, roads are 20th C!

25. **The lack of cross-Thames tunnels and bridges for north-south rail travel** within London as well as getting more freight off the roads and back onto the rails, freeing up capacity/reducing hazards. Silvertown Tunnel should be rail-based, not road!
<https://stopsilvertowntn.com/>

26. **Up-grade on the District Line** (with population increase crowding is set to increase on that line from Richmond in next 25 years; that line is also notoriously crowded in peak-hours between Earls Court and Westminster).

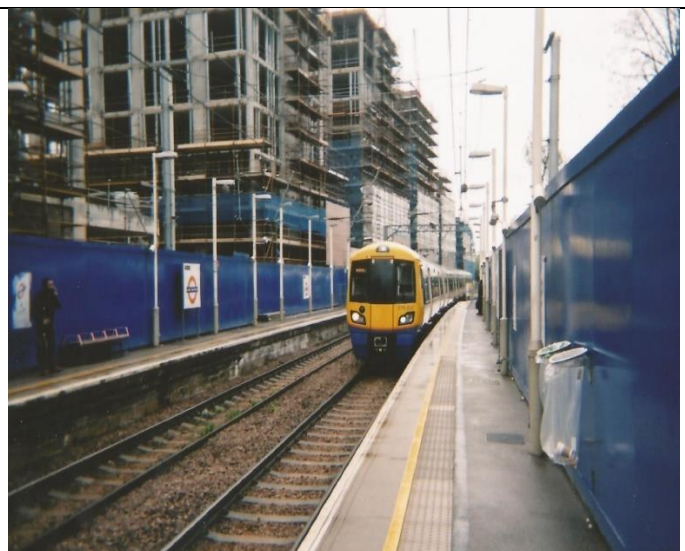
27. **West Hampstead - new platforms for Chiltern Line services** and possibly Metropolitan Line, thereby enabling interchange with North London Line, Thameslink and Jubilee Lines. Unsure, need more detail of feasibility.

28. **Cricklewood-Action North West London Line** – reinstatement of passenger services – must be done/supported and delivered: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dudding_Hill_line

29. **North Circular Corridor to Brent Cross:** LRT and/or Dockland's extension, both should be looked at.

30. **Brighton Main Line Mark 2 Project (BML2):** This would cover reopening Lewes - Uckfield, Tunbridge Wells Central - Eridge and Ashurst and Purley to Elmer's End, new spurs at Edenbridge, plus new tunnels providing direct links to Brighton and from Lewisham to Stratford (Thameslink). Key interchanges at Groombridge and Purley Gate (where Purley - Elmer's End crosses the Wealden line).

<https://www.bml2.co.uk/>



Caption Above: Croydon Tramway and Trams were bitterly opposed in the early days several decades ago, but have proved a success and popular for diverse mobility.

Caption Above: The North London Lines link places like Stratford and Barking with Richmond and many places in between. Heavily used, other lines could boost capacity.

Further Reference Reading:

1. Transport for London (TFL): <https://tfl.gov.uk/>
2. Crossrail: <https://www.crossrail.co.uk/#>
3. Visit London Guide: <https://visitlondon.com/traveller-information/getting-around-london/london-transport>
4. English Regional Transport Association: <https://www.facebook.com/ERTALondonM25>
5. Mayor of London/London Assembly: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/pollution-and-air-quality/health-and-exposure-pollution>

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