

WEST LONDON LINE GROUP

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Consultation Manager
High Speed Rail Consultation
Department for Transport
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Dear Sir or Madam

High Speed Rail Consultation : February 2011

Introduction

1. I am writing on behalf of the West London Line Group to give the Group's responses to this welcome document. We would ask that these be read in conjunction with the Group's recent documents, "West London Line Developments – 2008-2015" (May 2008), "Development Proposals for the West London Line 2009-2019" (June 2009), and "Key Concerns regarding the L&SE and WCML RUS's" (February 2011), plus the Group's responses to the Electrification and the London & South East RUS documents.
2. This response first sets out the Group's advice on how HS2 should be seen in the context of rail connectivity, problems of rail capacity and regeneration in inner north-west and west London and how these factors can strengthen considerably the case for HS2, assuming that infrastructure developments assumed in some documents, notably the London & South East RUS, will be delivered alongside Crossrail and HS2 schemes.
3. We then highlight the political advantage of ensuring better access by more UK taxpayers to HS2, HS1 and Crossrail, principally by a new link between HS2 and HS1 via the West London Line, Brighton Main Line and the Merstham M23/M25 interchange.
4. We then comment on the detail in the HS2 document that concern us.
5. Finally, we have attached seven Appendices, the first five of which were attached to our response to Network Rail's draft London & South East RUS. Appendices 2, 3 and 5 are the most relevant to HS2, with a new second page to Appendix 2 showing our suggested diagrammatic layout of the HS2, Crossrail, GWML and WLL platforms at Old Oak Common. Appendices 6 and 7
6. Broadly speaking, the Group agrees with the present and future situation as described in this document and supports the document's aims and approach.

Rail connectivity and regeneration in inner north-west and west London

7. In particular, the Group would strongly urge that the best possible advantage be taken of the opportunities for (i) connectivity and (ii) regeneration offered by the present proposed HS2 London station at Old Oak Common, since it is to be located:-
 - a) alongside both Crossrail (CR) and the Great Western Main Line (GWML)
 - b) on the Chiltern line alignment between Northolt and Paddington
 - c) close to the intersections of HS2, CR, GWML and the above Chiltern line section with the North London Line (NLL) and the West London Line (WLL) the last of which provides direct links to the three southern rail networks
 - d) close to other existing rail passenger links such as the Bakerloo and Central Lines
 - e) close to potential rail passenger links such as the Dudden Hill Line to/from the Midland Main Line
8. These advantages would appear to be significant, especially as they would also address:-
 - a) the forecasted rail capacity problems in the Euston, Marylebone, Paddington, Victoria and Waterloo areas; and
 - b) the perceived need to provide strong, yet cost-effective, links between all of the networks mentioned in paragraph 3 above in the inner London area, (ii) these and Heathrow and Gatwick, (iii) all the foregoing and High Speed 1 (HS1) and High Speed 2 (HS2), and (iv) between HS1 and HS2 themselves without putting additional pressure on London termini and the tube network between them;
 - c) gaining full regenerative benefits offered by the three Opportunity Areas close to Old Oak Common, namely Park Royal, White City and Earl's Court & West Kensington
 - d) supporting other developments in inner west London, including Kensal Gas Works, Paddington Basin, Olympia and those in the Chelsea Harbour/Imperial Wharf area.
9. The Group strongly urges that in order to give greater support for the case for HS2, proper strong emphasis is given to the potential of the WLL's and NLL's connectivity at Old Oak with other important rail destinations such as Clapham Junction and with the Opportunity Areas and other developments listed above. These aspects appear to have been completely overlooked in the blue panel and elsewhere on page 85 and on page 111 of the HS2 consultation document.
10. The Group would also advise that greater note is taken of the comments relating to HS2 in Network Rail's London & South East RUS. In particular, we would urge that the options for connectivity with other parts of the rail network, e.g., via Old Oak Common, further strengthen the case for HS2 in aiding the corralling and dispersal of its future passengers more easily across the rail network, especially in London and the south-east.
11. We would highlight the opportunities offered by the West London Line in this regard. The only case assessed in Network Rail's London & South East RUS is that for extending all WLL platforms to accommodate 8-car trains at a present frequency of one train per hour – yet this has a BCR of 4.2, with the

comment, “this represents very good value for money”. We believe that this BCR can at least be maintained and probably enhanced if (i) trains on the London Overground WLL service are also extended to 8-cars and (ii) if the WLL platforms are further extended to accommodate 12-cars trains from the WCML, GWML, SWML and BML networks.

Easing rail congestion at termini north and south of the Thames

12. Thus we have suggested in our response to Network Rail’s London & South East RUS that fuller use is made of the WLL in relieving congestion (i) at Euston, Paddington and Marylebone by diverting trains via the WLL south to new platforms at Clapham Junction and (ii) at Victoria and Waterloo by diverting SWT, Southern and possibly Southeastern services north to Old Oak Common. These measures would also have the result in providing more opportunity for those in west and south London and others in south-west, south and south-east England to access HS2 and Crossrail. This would relieve Network Rail’s concerns about whether and how services on the WLL would properly be able to deal with demands to and from HS2 and Crossrail at Old Oak Common (see para 7.12.6 of NR’s London & SE RUS).

Political desirability of ensuring better access by more UK taxpayers to HS2, Crossrail and HS1

13. Furthermore, given that all UK taxpayers will be paying for HS2 and Crossrail, we would urge making both these projects easily available to as many of them as possible.
14. Those in inner west London on the West London Line corridor should be encouraged to reach these new rail projects via Old Oak Common.
15. We also note the relative prosperity in west London, and in the south-east, south and south-west of the country, plus the general desire for modal shift from road to rail in these regions.
16. Given the above, we would also advise linking HS2 with HS1 not only (i) via Euston, but also (ii) via Crossrail through Central London and Docklands, AND (iii) via the West London Line, Brighton Main Line and Redhill – Ashford corridors, through many of south-east England’s key population and business centres and transport interchanges outside Central London.
17. All three routes would give more capacity between the two HS networks, offer diversionary routes at times of disruption and make both networks more accessible to those in the south-east, south and south-west of the capital and the country.
18. On the last of these three routes, HS2/HS1 trains would run directly from HS2’s tracks at Old Oak Common onto the West London Line, with a station at ‘Philbeach’. Philbeach is the working title for a proposed new tube/rail facility in the north-east quadrant of the Earl’s Court & West Kensington Opportunity Area that would link the eastern end of the District Line platforms at West Kensington station to a new HS station on the WLL, with both these sets of platforms linked to each other and to new Piccadilly Line platforms below.
19. Just north of the Thames, the HS2/HS1 trains would diverge from the WLL before Cremorne Bridge on a new trajectory across the river to traverse the far end of Clapham Junction Yard where there would be a new HS1/HS2 station linked to Clapham Junction domestic platforms.

20. The HS2/HS1 link would continue on stilts above the Brighton Main Line (BML) - which will be at capacity between Clapham and Croydon by 2019 - to serve new high level platforms at East Croydon and to descend into a new tunnel through the North Downs near Coulsdon.
21. The HS1/HS2 link would then swing east to a new station, 'Merstham Parkway (for Gatwick)', immediately alongside the M23/M25 interchange and then continue along the alignment of the Redhill - Tonbridge rail line (possibly using the existing track) and the Tonbridge – Ashford link to HS1.
22. Those from across south and south-west England would be able to reach the HS1 and HS2 networks via Merstham Parkway station, thus eliminating the 27-mile road journey (54 mile round trip) between here and Ebbsfleet IPS, the present advertised railhead for those seeking HS1 from the south-west.

The Group's detailed comments on the HS2 document

Executive Summary and Chapters 1 – 4 (pages 7 to 80)

23. We are broadly in agreement with these sections of the consultation document

Chapter 5 – The Government's Proposed Route for HS2 (London – West Midlands)

24. We support the proposed route. However, we have the following observations (from south to north):-

Old Oak Common - International

25. We understand from the HS2 team that all HS2 trains will be stopping at Old Oak, at least to start with. We would fully endorse this and would not want to see any such stops discontinued at a later time, given the scale of connectivity possible here and the regeneration opportunities in this inner north-west and west London sub-region.
26. We would re-iterate our comments above that full note is taken of the potential of the WLL's and NLL's connectivity at Old Oak Common with other important rail destinations such as Clapham Junction and with the Opportunity Areas and other developments listed above. These aspects appear to have been completely overlooked in the blue panel and elsewhere on page 85 and on page 111 of the HS2 consultation document.
27. We believe that the HS2 station at Old Oak should have 'International' in its title, as we propose no fewer than three connections between HS2 and HS1 diverging at this station and that Old Oak should therefore be considered as an International station.

Connections to HS1 (para 5.7, page 86)

28. We support the proposal of a single-track link between HS2 and HS1 via Euston. We also believe that there should be two other links between HS2 and HS1; (a) via Crossrail through Central London and (b) via the West London Line, Brighton Main Line and Redhill – Ashford rail link.

Old Oak Common to the West Midlands (paras 5.7 - 5.13, pages 86 and 87)

29. We support the comments here.

HS2 links to Heathrow (blue panel, column 1, page 87)

30. We have yet to be convinced that direct connections between Heathrow and HS2 from either the north or the south are necessary and/or cost effective. We believe that good single cross-platform interchanges at Old Oak between HS2 southbound and Crossrail westbound trains and Crossrail eastbound and HS2 northbound trains at Old Oak International (see Page 2 of Appendix 2 attached) may be sufficient both in terms of customer demand and cost-effectiveness and thus value for money.

Intermediate stations on HS2 (blue panel in column 2, page 87) and other benefits HS2 can bring to its local communities

31. We can fully understand and sympathise with those protesting against HS2, especially those in the Chilterns. Therefore, we strongly believe that those who live on or close to the HS2's route, or those who would otherwise be adversely affected by it, should be able to benefit from as much as possible from HS2.

Direct commuting from HS2 corridor to Central London, Docklands and Birmingham

32. We would assume that one of the easiest markets to persuade to switch from car to rail would be London-bound commuters and others in the Chilterns between Wendover and Denham
33. To attract these we would suggest that a station, 'Denham Parkway', be built on the HS2 route immediately south-east of its crossing of the M25
34. This station should be accessible from both the M25 and A412 and possibly other local roads. This would then serve important commuting communities in a wedge-shaped area bounded by Denham, High Wycombe, Wendover, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead and Watford and would relieve pressure on the Chiltern Line's and West Coast Main Line's intermediate services to London and Birmingham.
35. Enough land along the proposed HS2 route between Old Oak Common and Denham Parkway should be secured to allow both Crossrail and HS2 services on the route so that those in the Chilterns who would appear to be the most affected by HS2 would have swift direct access to the West End, City and Docklands.
36. Denham Parkway station should have at least an island platform between the two centre 'up' and 'down' tracks. These would be used both by Crossrail trains terminating here and some HS2 trains stopping here en route to London or Birmingham.
37. We would expect that this station would also encourage reasonable levels of demand between this area of NW London/SW Herts/SE Bucks, plus other M25-connected communities around London, and Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Positive impacts for airport usage in Birmingham and the South-east

38. The station would also allow the option for HS2 West Midlands passengers to interchange here with coach services to and from Heathrow via the M25 and M4.

39. It should be noted that this station would encourage reasonable levels of demand between this area of NW London/SW Herts/SE Bucks, plus other M25-connected communities around London, and Birmingham International Airport, with HS2 allowing Birmingham International Airport to become another of London's airports.
40. The travel time between Old Oak Common – Birmingham International would be comparable with those between (i) Victoria and Gatwick and (ii) Liverpool Street and Stansted. The time between Uxbridge and Birmingham International by HS2 would probably be significantly less than by M25 between Uxbridge and both Gatwick and Stansted.
41. Thus pursuing the option of Birmingham International Airport as one of London's airports should ease demand pressures at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted and allow quicker road/rail – plane transits at all these.

Preparing for future expansion of HS2 between London and Birmingham – and intermediate stations

42. At least safeguarding at this stage enough land along the rest of the route to allow for four-track working (and the relevant environmental protection measures) in the years ahead would be a sensible step, given the length of time and disruption involved and yet the necessity and now the success story of double-tracking the Trent Valley line.
43. HS2 will be the prime rail link across the country. Not only should it be built to allow for reasonably foreseeable growth of demand, but, since demand for rail links such as HS2 will almost certainly continue to be massively under-forecast, arrangements should be made now so that an expansion of this premier UK rail link can be implemented without having to go through a similar process as this at some time in the future.
44. There continues to be pressure for more housing in the UK and especially in the south east. With fast direct rail services to London and Birmingham, the presently rural parts of the HS2 corridor would become very attractive for housebuilders and commuters.
45. A number of intermediate stations with loops to allow non-stop trains to pass stopping services should also at least be planned for at this stage.
46. We would suggest securing enough land to build three other stations on the HS2 route north of Denham Parkway before HS2 opens
47. These stations would be about 15-25 miles apart, with suggested locations (i) in the Aylesbury area, (ii) between Buckingham and Brackley, and (iii) in the Kenilworth/Royal Leamington Spa area.
48. Outside the peaks, Denham Parkway and these other intermediate stations would be served in rotation, i.e., in a group of five or six consecutive trains, one or two would run non-stop between Old Oak International and Birmingham International, with the other four each calling either at Denham Parkway or at one of the three above. There would be four tracks (two 'up' and two 'down') through each of these three stations, and with 'up' and 'down' island platforms.

Regeneration and Growth (paras 5.86 – 5.95 pages 111 and 112)

49. The Group is broadly in agreement with these sections of the consultation document

50. However, in relation to para 5.89, the Group strongly urges that in order to give greater support for the case for HS2, note is taken of the potential of the WLL's and NLL's connectivity at Old Oak with other important rail destinations such as Clapham Junction and with the Opportunity Areas and other developments listed above. These aspects appear to have been completely overlooked in para 5.89.

51. In relation to para 5.93, the Group would urge the strongest collaboration over connectivity and regeneration between HS2 and:-

- Crossrail
- Network Rail
- Transport for London
- TOCs operating services on the WCML, Chiltern Line, GWML, SWML, BML, MML, London Overground network
- The London local authorities for Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Wandsworth and Westminster
- Rail user groups, residential and community groups and Chambers of Commerce in inner West and North West London
- Key developers operating within the Opportunity Areas and development sites especially those in the West London Line corridor

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully

Mark Balaam
Chairman

WLLG SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERATIONS AT CLAPHAM JUNCTION

If Platform 1 is not restored for use by LO WLL trains before ELLX2 arrives at Clapham Junction and Platform 2 is reconfigured as planned for both LO's WLL and SLL trains, this will result in:-

- a) neither part of the reconfigured Platform 2 being able to cope with trains longer than 4-cars, when this strategy calls for 8-car trains on the WLL.
- b) dangerous levels of crowding on the reconfigured Platform 2 given the variety of conflicting passenger movements (i) between the different parts of Platform 2 and the two already-inadequate platform exits and (ii) interchanging between WLL and SLL trains. Such dangers would be augmented by the location of the refreshment facility in the building on this platform and would be further increased during any disruption of either service at this station.
- c) Platform 16 (extended if necessary to accommodate the lengthening of the Southern and other WLL trains) and both its approaches need to be bi-directionally signalled. This improvement would then allow these longer trains to terminate, or stop in either direction, at Clapham Junction.
- d) Beyond this we believe that two new terminating platforms (A and B) should be constructed parallel and to the north of Platforms 1 and 2 to accommodate WCML, GWML, Chiltern and/or other services that cannot be accommodated in their traditional London terminals. We believe that the interchanges at Shepherd's Bush, West Brompton and Clapham Junction would be attractive enough for sizeable numbers of passengers, especially given general growth in rail travel generally, to use these links instead of traditional termini and connecting tube lines to warrant investment in these two new platforms.
- e) Furthermore, on the south side of the station, we believe that Platform 17 should become an island platform with the two faces separated by two south-facing bay platforms to accommodate the proposed London Overground service from Crystal Palace via Balham.
- f) Finally, all these 22 platforms should be crossed at high level by Platforms Y and Z on our proposed HS2 – HS1 link via Merstham Parkway

WLLG SUGGESTIONS FOR LAYOUT AT OLD OAK COMMON

WLL through services between Shepherd's Bush and Willesden Junction/Wembley Central would have a high level two 12-car platform station above the east – west tracks and be connected by covered walkways to the east end of the platforms for the GWML, Crossrail and HS2 services.

The west end of the GWML, Crossrail and HS2 platforms would be connected by covered walkways to the platforms on the NLL, Dudding Hill Line (if it is proposed and feasible to run passenger trains between here and the Midland Main Line) and a new station located on the Central Line at a point between the present East Acton and North Acton stations.

WLL services that would terminate here would do so within the GWML station box. These would be 12-car trains from any of the three southern networks.

Our suggested HS2-HS1 Link via Merstham would follow or shadow the alignments of the entry and exit roads for North Pole Depot, as used previously by the Eurostar trains.

It is also hoped that, despite the proposal for HS2 to use the Chiltern Line alignment from here, a new alignment will be built to allow Chiltern Line trains to serve the interchange, with the option of continuing on the WLL.

WEST LONDON LINE GROUP

Suggested station layout at Old Oak Common

--- HS2 from Birmingham to London/HS1 via Euston, Crossrail or West London Line --->



---<-----Crossrail to Heathrow/Denham from City-----<



----->-----Crossrail from Heathrow/Denham to City----->

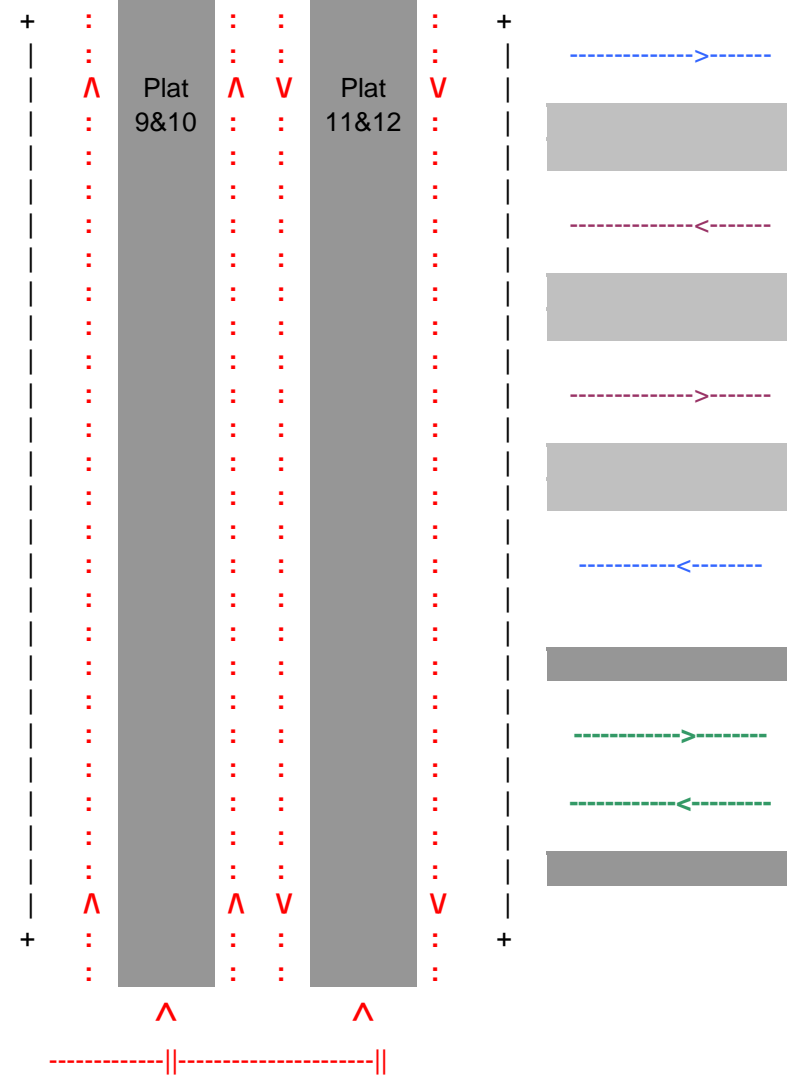


<--- HS2 to Birmingham from London/HS1 via Euston, Crossrail or West London Line---



-----GWML from Bristol/South West/South Wales to London ---->

-----<--- GWML from London to Bristol/South West/South Wales-----



New West London Line Platforms (all 12 cars)

IMPACTS ON EACH OTHER OF (I) THE WLL AND (II) HS2, CROSSRAIL AND THE OTHER SERVICES IN THE OLD OAK COMMON AREA

We strongly believe that the WLL has a major role to play in providing connecting facilities for both Crossrail and HS2 at Old Oak Common, with myriad connections being possible between a variety of rail and tube services in and around the site.

Both should have good connections with Clapham Junction, the UK's busiest rail interchange at present, with its extensive links across the whole of the affluent south and southwest suburbs of London and, beyond that, all of Southern England from Hastings to Exeter.

These links will be by virtue of the WLL, which also serves a number of major centres that are generators and attractors for rail traffic. Examples include Shepherd's Bush, presently the home of the BBC and associated media companies and Westfield, the third largest retail complex in the UK, with a large residential hinterland. Kensington Olympia lies between the commercial centres of Kensington High Street and Hammersmith, with the latter having a number of commercial enterprises located along the Hammersmith Road to Hammersmith Broadway and beyond to the Riverside.

We have also advocated the re-modelling of this station so that it better serves the main road between these two centres and the new redevelopment comprising four contiguous sites that between them will provide housing for about 6,000 residents.

Further south is the huge redevelopment site in the Earl's Court & West Kensington Opportunity Area, which when built, will have homes for about 5,000 -10,000 and a strong commercial emphasis with at least one new 5-star hotel and employment for 20,000 people, alongside the existing Empress State, which contains c4,000 Met Police administrative staff.

In addition to the recent developments around Imperial Wharf station are two major sites, the first being Lots Road Power Station, with a 37- and a 25-storey tower and a large commercial space inside the old power station building. On the other side of the railway will be Chelsea Creek with a 39-storey glass tower and, at its base, a number of waterside destination restaurants surround the re-excavated Chelsea Basin. This station has a large catchment area spread between Battersea and Wandsworth Bridges as far north as the King's Road/New King's Road.

A very large part of the market for GWML services to the West Country and South Wales, plus that for Heathrow and, via HS2, for Birmingham resides in the Southern and South Western district of the capital, also inner west London residents seeking a swift journey to places such as Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon and the City, will also want to take advantage of Crossrail. It would be iniquitous to deny these Londoners, who have contributed much to the public purse to pay for these projects, the relatively low-cost means to access them easily from within or close to their own localities.

**WLLG SUGGESTED MAXIMUM SERVICE PATTERN FOR WLL AT OLD OAK COMMON
FOR DISPERSAL**

Northbound						Now	May	Dec	May	Dec	May	Dec	May	Dec	May	
Time	TOC	Origin	Destination	Platform	Departing		2011	2011	2012	2012	2013	2013	2014	2014	2015	
				at OOC	Cars	17.11	17.12	17.14	17.15	17.16	17.17	17.18	17.19	17.20	17.21	
xx00	LO	Clapham Jn East	Stratford Milton	WLL	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
xx03	SN	Croydon	Keynes	WLL	12	4	4	4	8	12	12	12	12	12	12	
xx06	LM	Clapham Jn	Birm NS	WLL	12						12	12	12	12	12	
xx09	SWT	Windsor	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
xx12	Space for recovery/perturbations															
xx15	LO	Clapham Jn	Willesden Jn	WLL	8		4	4	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
xx18	SE	Longhedge	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
xx21	GW	Clapham Jn	Slough	GWML	12							12	12	12	12	
xx24	HS Link	HS1	Birm IPS	HS2												
xx27	SN	Dorking	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
xx30	LO	Clapham Jn East	Stratford Milton	WLL	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
xx33	SN	Croydon	Keynes	WLL	12			4	8	12	12	12	12	12	12	
xx36	LM	Clapham Jn	Birm NS	WLL	12						12	12	12	12	12	
xx39	SWT	Windsor	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
xx42	Space for recovery/perturbations															
xx45	LO	Clapham Jn	Wij	WLL	8		4	4	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
xx48	SE	Longhedge	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
xx51	GW	Clapham Jn	Slough	GWML	12							12	12	12	12	
xx54	Freight															
xx57	SN	Dorking	OOO	NPD/GW	0											
				Sub-Total	96	12	20	24	40	48	72	96	96	96	96	
Southbound																
Time	TOC	Origin	Destination	Platform	Departing											
				at OOC	Cars											
xx01	LO	Stratford Milton	Clapham Jn East	WLL	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
xx04	SN	Keynes	Croydon	WLL	12	4	4	4	8	12	12	12	12	12	12	
xx07	LM	Birm NS	Clapham Jn	WLL	12						12	12	12	12	12	
xx10	SN	OOO	Dorking	NPD/GW	12								12	12	12	
xx13	Space															
xx16	LO	Willesden Jn	Clapham Jn	WLL	8		4	4	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
xx19	SWT	OOO	Windsor	NPD/GW	12									12	12	
xx22	GW	Slough	Clapham Jn	GWML	12							12	12	12	12	
xx25	HS Link	Birm IPS	HS1	HS2												
xx28	SE	OOO	Longhedge	NPD/GW	12										12	
xx31	LO	Stratford Milton	Clapham Jn East	WLL	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
xx34	SN	Keynes	Croydon	WLL	12			4	8	12	12	12	12	12	12	
xx37	LM	Birm NS	Clapham Jn	WLL	12						12	12	12	12	12	
xx40	SN	OOO	Dorking	NPD/GW	12								12	12	12	
xx43	Space															
xx46	LO	Willesden Jn	Clapham Jn	WLL	8		4	4	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
xx49	SWT	OOO	Windsor	NPD/GW	12									12	12	
xx52	GW	Slough	Clapham Jn	GWML	12							12	12	12	12	
xx55	Freight															
xx58	SE	OOO	Longhedge	NPD/GW	12										12	
				Sub-Total	168	12	20	24	40	48	72	96	120	144	168	
				TOTAL	264	24	40	48	80	96	144	192	216	240	264	

WLLG PROPOSALS FOR HS2 –HS1 LINK via MERSTHAM (The Link)

With apologies for all those who may live, or have an interest, in properties that may be affected by this proposal.

From London (Old Oak Common) HS2 platforms the Link would diverge to the WLL, probably at a point south of the WLL/WCML platforms over the GWML and north of the site of the proposed North Pole station (WLL)

Options for the route the Link would take, apart from the existing WLL tracks themselves, may be limited north of Imperial Wharf.

The Link would most likely be a two-track railway either alongside or above (on stilts) the existing WLL as far south as Imperial Wharf.

We appreciate that throughout the length of the Link there may be particular engineering problems, such as building new tracks, possibly with OHLE, on stilts over a busy railway that needs to operate continuously during construction and occasionally is on a high embankment with limited widths

Possible Link station sites on the WLL are Shepherd's Bush, Kensington Olympia, 'Philbeach' or West Brompton, and Imperial Wharf (for Crossrail 2) and Clapham Junction. South of Clapham Junction, the candidates would be East Croydon, Merstham Parkway, Tonbridge and Ashford.

Alternative links that should be available between the HS1 and HS2 networks before the Euston tunnel is built would be (i) that via the WLL and reversal at Waterloo International, and (ii) that via the WLL and Longhedge Junction, and then both via the Chatham Lines.

South of Imperial Wharf the Link would continue SSE across the River Thames to follow an alignment just east of Plough Road. This may cause difficulties with the operation of Battersea heliport.

At Clapham Junction, the Link's two, three or four parallel platforms would cross the western half of the carriage sidings to the west of the domestic station. This should give enough space for any International station facilities here, while still maintaining a closer link between them and the domestic platforms and commercial centre than, say, that at Stratford.

This alignment through the proposed Clapham Junction IPS would appear to be the shortest and most direct trajectory to line up with the BML south of the domestic station.

The greatest demand on the BML is between Clapham and Croydon, with full capacity expected to be reached by 2019. Given this and other pressures, we would suggest that the stilts on this section carry four tracks, with two continuing north of Clapham Junction domestic platforms to Victoria and/or Waterloo. Two tracks only may need to be laid immediately, but the extra capacity should be built in at the earliest stage. The second pair of tracks could continue south as far as any of Croydon, Coulsdon, Gatwick or Three Bridges; the costs and BCR of doubling the Balcombe viaduct may not be persuasive enough before, say, 2050.

The need to cross over a number of overbridges crossing the BML may mean that the Link would run on stilts about 10 metres above the present trackbed and it would therefore be a new prominent feature across open spaces such as Wandsworth and Tooting Bec Commons and from the back gardens in the streets that back on to the present BML between Wandsworth Common and Selhurst stations.

Enough headroom would need to be reserved for OHLE and/or double-deck trains on tracks at both levels

The only building that should be in the way of this trajectory, assuming all the other station entrances are low enough, or can be made so, is a smallish building above Thornton Heath station.

There hopefully will be enough flexibility in the schemes for East Croydon to accommodate the Link and IPS facilities here, possibly a little to the north of the existing platforms.

Between South Croydon and Coulsdon, again the Link on stilts would be a prominent feature, but here it may only need to be about 4 to 5 metres above the existing tracks as there are no overbridges to be crossed. Again, enough headroom would need to be reserved for OHLE and/or double-deck trains on tracks at both levels

We have not fleshed out proposals for the next stage of the Link, but one option could be a new tunnel, close to the existing two, through the North Downs and then to follow the alignment of the M23 (possibly on top of it). The best site for the new Merstham Parkway station would seem to be just south of the M23/M25 junction, with parking close to the west side of the M23. The Link would then continue to follow the M23 to the area east of South Nutfield where it would curve left to connect with the Redhill – Tonbridge line halfway between Nutfield station and the western portal of Bletchingly tunnel.

We have assumed that the 15 miles between here and Tonbridge is used lightly enough, yet with an alignment straight enough, to allow Link services, normal domestic passenger services and domestic and international freight services all to use it without any further major enhancement.

We have not reached a conclusion on whether Tonbridge should have an IPS, or, if not, what work would need to be done to allow trains on the Link to pass through or call at Tonbridge. A cursory glance at the timetable seems to indicate that there may be paths, even in the morning peak, for Link trains on the existing tracks between Ashford and Tonbridge without needing further intervention.

We are fully aware that there will be concerns expressed by those concerned with the environment and residential amenity, in areas as diverse as Wandsworth Common and the Eden Valley. However, we think that on balance, with (a) its opportunities for improved rail travel that are able to benefit more of those along its length than, say, along HS2 in the Chilterns, (b) the pressing need to increase BML capacity, (c) the advantages in bringing the international and domestic high speed rail networks closer to the Southern and South West parts of the country, and (d) its ability to act as an operational alternative to, and much more accessible for many Londoners and UK residents than, that via Euston, the case for the Link should be a positive one and should have lower costs and a higher BCR than a tunnel from Coulsdon to Central London.

MB
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WEST LONDON LINE GROUP SUPPORTS HS2

1. Opportunities:-

- for London to be linked by High Speed Rail to the rest of the country
- to produce new capacity between London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland
- to relieve congestion on and improve links by the West Coast Main Line
- for Birmingham Airport to become a 'London' airport
- to speed travel times between Heathrow and points north by cross-platform interchange at Old Oak Common with Crossrail, thus reducing congestion on the M1, M40 and M25
- to link HS2 with Crossrail to provide fast direct services between Stratford, Liverpool Street, Central London, Denham and Central Birmingham
- to link HS2 with HS1 via the West London Line, Clapham Junction and Merstham (for Gatwick and M23/M25 interchange, thereby making both HS networks more accessible for travel between the North, South West and Southern England, without having to travel via London

2. Opportunities for South Chilterns:-

To press for new Denham Parkway station on HS2 axis to:-

allow Chiltern commuters in centres between Aylesbury, Amersham and Denham swift direct access to the West End, City and Canary Wharf

allow Uxbridge/Greenford/Denham catchment swift direct access to Central Birmingham

3. Opportunities via Old Oak Common:-

This large brownfield site surrounded by regeneration areas should be a new major West London Interchange between Crossrail, HS2, GWML, Heathrow Express/Connect, Chiltern and the West London Line (WLL).

All West London Line stations to accommodate 12-car trains (Network Rail has announced a Benefit/Cost Ratio of 4.2 to extend all of them for 8-car trains for just one train per hour). These extended platforms would not only ease congestion at Euston, Marylebone, Paddington, Victoria and Waterloo but also provide enough capacity to serve HS2 adequately to and from south of the Thames, without needing to change via congested London terminals.

4. Additional capacity, flexibility, visibility and accessibility for both High Speed Networks if trains also ran directly between HS2 and HS1 via:-

- (a) Crossrail 1 by link at Old Oak Common and Stratford; and
- (b) West London Line to new stations at Philbeach (Earl's Court Opportunity Area), Clapham Junction International, East Croydon, Merstham Parkway (for M25/M23 intersection and Gatwick Airport), Tonbridge and Ashford.



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THE GROUP'S PROPOSALS FOR NEW SERVICE LINKS

Trains to run directly between HS2 and HS1 via:-

- (c) Euston (as planned);
- (d) Crossrail 1 by link at Old Oak Common and Stratford; and
- (e) Direct link between HS2 and WLL to Philbeach, Clapham Junction International, East Croydon, Merstham Parkway (for M25/M23 intersection and Gatwick Airport), Tonbridge and Ashford.

THE GROUP'S PROPOSALS FOR STATION IMPROVEMENTS

Denham Parkway – A new station on HS2 for South Chilterns (Wendover – Denham) close to M25/M40 junction with (a) Crossrail services through Central London and (b) HS2 services Denham – W Midlands.

Old Oak Common – The new major West London Interchange between Crossrail, HS2, GWML, Heathrow Express, Heathrow Connect, Chiltern, West London Line.

All West London Line stations to have 12-car platforms (already BCR of 4.2 to extend all of them to 8-cars for just one train per hour). These would, with additional platforms at Clapham Junction and at Old Oak Common, allow congestion relief at Euston, Marylebone, Paddington, Victoria and Waterloo and provide enough capacity to serve HS2 adequately to/from south of the Thames.

North Pole – A new WLL station to serve North Kensington and the White City Opportunity Area

Kensington Olympia – to be re-modelled with the WLL southbound track slewed to transform present platform into an island extended southwards to Hammersmith Road bridge and NW Warwick Road sites.

Philbeach – A new key interchange formed in the middle of the Earl's Court & West Kensington Opportunity Area by providing accesses between West Kensington station to new platforms on the WLL, which would be able to accommodate domestic and HS2-HS1 trains and to the Piccadilly Line below.

Imperial Wharf – A new interchange between the West London Line and Crossrail 2 – aka Chelsea-Hackney. This station should also be linked via a cycle/footbridge alongside Cremorne Bridge to North Battersea and strengthened interchange with London River Services at Chelsea Harbour Pier.

Battersea High Street – A new WLL station to serve this area of North Battersea directly.

Wandsworth Road and/or Clapham High Street – to be served by Southeastern to allow interchange with London Overground SLL services

Brixton, Loughborough Junction and Brockley stations all to have High Level platforms to:-

- (a) allow interchange between new London Overground and existing Southeastern services with those on tracks beneath (Southeastern, Thameslink, Southern, London Overground);
- (b) aid local regeneration; and
- (c) provide new direct links and interchanges from population growth areas to WLL corridor employment opportunities