



## **West London Transport Conference**

A West London Transport Conference was held at Ealing Town Hall on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Arranged by MVA Consultancy on behalf of the West London Alliance and the WESTTRANS Group of six West London Boroughs, the half day conference was attended by some 80 delegates representing local authorities, transport operators, businesses, health authorities, voluntary sector, academic institutions, community groups, transport interest groups and residents.

The keynote speech was given by the eminent town planner, Professor Sir Peter Hall, himself an Ealing resident. He explained some of the differences between West London and the other sub-regions of London and reviewed both recent developments of the bus network in London and major proposals for West London including Crossrail and the West London Tram. Peter illustrated some of the opportunities for improving interchange between rail services in West London, several of which have unfortunately already been lost. He also drew attention to the links between transport and urban structure and the opportunities for "densification" near the major West London transport hubs.

Three "perspectives" on transport in West London were then given by Councillor Jason Stacey, leader of Ealing Council and Chairman of the West London Alliance; by George Benham, a businessman who chairs the Travel Management Association of the Park Royal Industrial Estate; and by Keith Buchan, an independent transport planning consultant and local resident.

Delegates then had the opportunity to discuss in small groups their own views on transport issues and potential solutions to transport problems in West London. Opinions were recorded via delegate response sheets. Most numerous among the issues identified were congestion (both on roads and on peak period public transport services) and a lack of orbital routes. Other common concerns were land use development and accessibility; environment and pollution; integration and interchange between modes; and transport issues associated with Heathrow Airport.

Delegates suggestions for actions to tackle these problems were also numerous, but a number of themes can be identified from the responses. Traffic reduction through either pricing or travel planning was strongly advocated. Improvements to orbital routes was another high priority, possibly by major infrastructure improvements, but more likely to be achieved in the short term by improvements to bus services such as the "Fastbus" proposal. More general improvements to bus services were also a common theme, with faster routes and cheaper fares sought as a widespread solution. Many delegates supported specific transport infrastructure improvements, including the Airtrack proposal to serve Heathrow by rail via Staines and the Crossrail scheme to central London. Others sought better roads, the south circular being considered "a disgrace", but some delegates argued for additional capacity to be devoted to public transport and high occupancy vehicles. Interchange between modes should be made easier and more convenient, involving information, ticketing and measures to address personal security concerns, as well as physical layout improvements. Also featuring strongly were pleas for better planning, with facilities generating high volumes located near public transport hubs and improved town centres encouraging people to stay local in their trip-making. A more detailed account of these views and ideas can be found at the end of this report.



After the workshop session the conference heard two further presentations from Tom Parker of TTR Consultants on air quality issues and from Olivier Bastien, of Exel on freight consolidation centres. These presentations, and those of Professor Sir Peter Hall and Keith Buchan, can be found via the links below.

After a final plenary discussion session, Geoff Warren from London Borough of Ealing described the new WESTTRANS brand for the continuing co-operative efforts of transport officers from the six West London Boroughs and the Park Royal Partnership to address practical aspects of delivering improved transport in West London.

The Conference was chaired by the journalist and author, Christian Wolmar, who subsequently wrote an article for "Transport Times" concerning the difficulty of providing for orbital movements in cities. This can be found through the weblink below.

Next Steps: The West London Strategic Transport Group (WL STG) will consider the outcome from the conference at its next meeting on 28 February 2007 and will consider how to take forward the agenda for improving transport in West London.

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MVA Consultancy  
February 2007

Links to presentations (pdf formats) / article

Professor Sir Peter Hall (9.06MB) [details of link to be provided here]  
Keith Buchan (16KB)  
Tom Parker (4.28 MB)  
Olivier Bastien (3.63 MB)

Christian Wolmar (<http://www.christianwolmar.co.uk/articles/tt/jan6,07.shtml>)



**WEST LONDON TRANSPORT CONFERENCE**

**SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP OUTCOMES**

**(1) ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>Number of Mentions</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Congestion	30	
Lack of Orbitals	27	Connecting outer London, north-south routes
Land Use Development and accessibility	12	Densification, transport hubs, Access to town centres
Environment / Pollution	10	
Heathrow	10	T5, rail access, employment
Interchange / integration	10	
Overcrowding / Capacity	8	
Parking	8	Parking income – milking revenue
Car Dependence	7	Lack of public transport alternatives
Cycling	6	
More efficient use of roadspace	4	Bus priority, traffic signal phasing
Complex Planning process	3	“Lack of joined up thinking”, missed opportunities
Cost of transport	2	Public transport too expensive
Service Quality	2	Stock, stations, safety, hours
Crossrail	2	“Get on with it”
Freight	2	



**Other Comments, mentioned once:**

Tram  
Volume of travellers vs need for private space and independence  
Certainty of projects – allow businesses to plan  
Disruption in East London causes delays in West London  
Reduce growth; economic growth rather than number of people.  
Lorry movements taking waste to landfill  
Information on links that already exist.  
The school run  
Older, disabled people  
Isolated residential areas, estates  
London Plan employment forecasts  
Holes in provision for very local services (eg Northolt)  
Impact on inward investment in West London  
Linking transport planning with hospital catchment areas  
Inflexibility of TfL (“not invented here”)  
Getting people “into” not “around” West London  
Encourage White Van Man – need for local deliveries to keep West London economy moving  
Providing good public transport and local amenities in areas with low population density  
Changing travel behaviour  
Re-plan bus routes – split, change

**(2) ACTIONS AND SOLUTIONS**

Traffic Reduction (23)

These responses can be divided into three groups. The first group of 11 responses mentioned travel planning and / or “soft” measures to affect demand. Travel planning “with teeth” was desired by some while others wanted travel planning to be more appealing to developers and employers. Other softer measures mentioned included individual marketing, promoting car sharing and greater use of technology (internet, telephone conferencing, etc).

The second group (9 responses) looked to financial measures to reduce traffic. Seven respondents mentioned road pricing, congestion charging or parking costs as a means of reducing cars, traffic or congestion. Two others mentioned workplace parking charges or a more general approach to “making the car a less attractive alternative financially”.

The final group of comments were varied with one proposal to limit bus lanes to peak times so as to reduce congestion out of peak hours and one simply to “reduce cars on road”. The final suggestion contained a detailed proposal to reduce school run congestion through use of private buses or minibuses, said to be “very successful in North London”.

Orbital Routes (22)

Six responses mentioned improved orbital transport generally and four of these had no modal specification but an implication that road improvements needed to be considered as well as public modes, for instance “a more co-ordinated approach to orbital travel”. However two of these responses specifically mentioned orbital public transport routes. A further three responses referred either to the West London Orbital (Capita Symonds 2002) proposal or to unspecified orbital rail or underground links.

Seven responses made specific mention of Fastbus, with comments such as “joining up stations” and “the most realistic proposal so far”. A further six responses specifically mentioned improved, express or limited stop orbital bus services on orbital routes, in some cases referring to “connecting town centres and employment zones” or the need to “plug holes in the bus network”.

Bus Routes and Priorities (16)



This category of responses focussed on the bus as the best way forward, for example: "Enabling buses to move faster – more bus lanes – bigger buses – lower fares" and "More and cheaper bus services – the easiest way to provide more public transport with limited infrastructure and logistical problems". While some mentioned orbital movement, this was secondary to the more general approach of improved bus services, including fast bus routes and lanes, high capacity routes (Uxbridge Road to Shepherds Bush), more commitment to getting bus lanes built, express bus routes and bus lanes shared with high occupancy cars. One specific response referred to a Shuttle / Plus Bus service in isolated areas to enable people to get access to mainstream public transport services.

#### Interchange (14)

These comments were relatively straightforward, involving improved accessibility and interchange between modes at public transport hubs. Revisiting interchange opportunities on North London Line was mentioned, together with other specifics at White City and First Central.

#### Infrastructure (13)

Thirteen respondents suggested infrastructure improvements although the schemes advocated were diverse. Two supported Crossrail, including a link to Staines through T5; two supported Airtrack; three mentioned the tram (although one queried whether it was the right solution); two supported improved roads ("South Circular is disgraceful!") although one of these wanted the additional capacity reserved for public transport and car share lanes; one requested better parking at stations; and one specified Fastbus. One response made a plea for "high quality infrastructure, not cheap and cheerful busways better suited to semi-rural Brisbane (where I grew up)" and suggested Evergreen 2 (a Chiltern Railways project) as an exemplar.

#### Public Transport Generally (12)

These comments did not refer to specific modes but generally wished to see public transport services improved. Four responses wanted cheaper fares (e.g. "incentivise public transport use, not overprice it") and two referred to better integrated ticketing, particularly between rail and Oyster: "more joined up thinking, ticketing and working together". Others referred to reliability and frequency, making better use of existing infrastructure, faster services, more travel awareness information and improved public transport "attractiveness".

#### Planning (10)

These responses covered two complementary themes, first that land use development should be concentrated at transport hubs and second that provision of facilities in town centres would make it more attractive to "stay local" and hence reduce the need to travel. One rather different comment suggested that developers should be allowed to buy extra parking spaces, over and above current maxima.

#### Local Issues (9)

Six of these responses specifically mentioned the need to improve facilities for walking and cycling, one going on to mention urban realm, safety and security and one making a plea for better education of cyclists and motorists. The remaining three stressed "local solutions to local problems" and mentioned 24/7 operation at Heathrow and the need for better links from residential areas to town centres and employment areas.

#### Funding and Process (8)

Three responses related to the need for greater funding and, in particular, greater certainty and firm commitment on timing of delivery of major schemes. One noted that existing scheme appraisal methods were deficient and did not cover all the benefits of a scheme. Two responses related to consultation processes and in a similar vein, two



further comments urged quick solutions and a “leap of faith rather than wait for business cases to be worked through”. One response noted the need for co-ordination of TfL and local authorities on education and health authority policies, for example on school hours.

#### Environment (2)

Two respondents mentioned the need for a low emission zone.

#### Miscellaneous (17)

Three comments referred to Heathrow, but with differing viewpoints, one advocating cancellation of 3<sup>rd</sup> runway scheme, another seeking recognition of its national importance. Two responses mentioned taxis, particularly in respect of services to stations. Most other matters were mentioned by one delegate only but included: information, parking, use of the River Thames, Park Royal, safety awareness, re-thinking of opening hours for shops and schools, convert bus garages to termini. One advocated a more holistic approach to stop problems arising in one area when they are solved in another and one proposed “stronger local planners”.