



Passenger Focus's response to Network Rail's London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation

March 2011

Passenger Focus is the independent public body set up by the Government to protect the interests of Britain's rail passengers, England's bus and tram passengers outside London and coach passengers in England on scheduled domestic services. We are funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) but operate independently.

Our mission is to get the best deal for passengers. We have two main aims: to influence both long and short term decisions and issues that affect passengers; and to help passengers through advice, advocacy and empowerment.

With a strong emphasis on evidence-based campaigning and research, we ensure that we know what is happening on the ground. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of passengers and we work with the industry, passenger groups and Government to secure journey improvements.

Our vision is to ensure that operators, funders and regulators of transport systems and Government are always

‘putting passengers first’

This will be achieved through our mission of

‘getting the best deal for passengers’

Contents

	Page
1. Executive Summary	4
1.1 Recommendations	4
2. Introduction	7
2.1 Structure of this submission	7
3. Research evidence – Passengers’ key needs	8
3.1 Drivers of Passenger Satisfaction	8
3.2 Passenger satisfaction in the peak	9
3.3 Value for money	11
3.4 Conclusions from passenger research and implications for the London and South East RUS	11
4. Comments on the RUS context	12
4.1 Scope and planning context	12
4.2 Demand forecasting	12
4.3 Funding and delivery of committed schemes, existing strategy and future requirements	13
4.4 The efficiency agenda	13
4.5 Rolling stock	14
4.6 The adequacy of the Corridor strategy	15
4.7 Linkages to other proposals	16
4.8 Demand beyond the peak	16
5. Analysis of gaps and options	18
5.1 General comments	18
5.1.1 Gap A: Reading/outer Thames Valley	19
5.1.2 Gap B: East Coast Mainline (ECML) - London approaches	23
5.1.3 Gap C: Lea Valley corridor	25
5.1.4 Gap D: Great Eastern Main Line (GEML)	27
5.1.5 Gap E: Brighton Main Line	29
5.1.6 Gap F: South West Main Line (SWML)	31
5.1.7 Gap G: Windsor Lines	33
5.1.8 Gap H: Elephant & Castle corridor	35
5.1.9 Gap I: Orbital routes	37
5.2 Network connectivity	39
5.2.1 Gap J Access to London Heathrow Airport	39
5.2.2 Gap K maximizing the benefits of Crossrail	39
5.2.3 Gap L future Crossrail 2 Chelsea to Hackney	40
5.2.4 Gap M Implications of HS2 on the London area	40
5.2.5 Gap N Capacity implications of HS1 to HS2 link	40
5.2.6 Gap O Other connectivity schemes	40

6. Solent and South Hampshire	42
6.1 General Comments, the National Passenger Survey, Passenger Priorities	42
6.2 Gap S1 – Direct connectivity to Southampton Central and Southampton Airport Parkway	44
6.2.1 Options S1.1 and S1.2 – Diversion of Southern services	44
6.2.2 S1.3 – Diversion of the Great Western Portsmouth - Cardiff service	44
6.2.3 S1.4 – New service Southampton – Portsmouth and Southsea via Botley, with redoubling the Portsmouth Single/New platform at Eastleigh	44
6.2.4 S1.5 – New service Southampton – Portsmouth and Southsea via Netley	45
6.2.5 S1.6 Divert the Great Western Cardiff to Portsmouth service via Chandler’s Ford	45
6.2.6 S1.7 Extension of the Salisbury ‘Figure 6’ service back to Salisbury	45
6.3 Gap S2 – Marchwood Line	46
6.4 Gap S3 – Car park provision	46
7. Summary table of Passenger Focus’ responses to RUS options	48
8. Summary table of Passenger Focus’ responses to RUS options for Solent and Hampshire	50
Appendices	
A. List of stakeholders	51
B. Bibliography	52

1. Executive summary and recommendations

Passenger Focus supports the broad objectives behind the Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) process, and welcomes both the formal, and informal, consultative approach adopted by Network Rail.

The London and South East RUS is an important document, planning for the future capacity and investment needs of the rail network in the medium to longer term. There are significant challenges which the RUS has to address.

The Passenger Focus response to the consultation draft is informed by an extensive evidence base. Information from the National Passenger Survey (NPS)¹ and research into passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services² indicates that the key factors that the RUS must address are punctuality, frequency, and capacity. Provision of information, particularly during disruption, and the ways delays are handled are also highly significant to passengers.

The submission includes comments on the RUS context and suggests some aspects of the Draft RUS will require further development or ongoing review if passenger needs from the rail network are to be adequately addressed over the next two decades.

The gaps and options considered by the RUS are assessed and detailed comments on the proposals are made. A summary table provides a succinct overview of Passenger Focus' responses to the proposals.

A short section covers the specific issues in the Solent and South Hampshire area.

1.1 Recommendations

Passenger research demonstrates a number of first order factors that the RUS must seek to address. These include:

- punctuality and reliability of the trains
- delivery of sufficient capacity, particularly sufficient seats and minimising overcrowding
- adequate frequency of trains to meet passenger needs.

Provision of information, particularly during disruption, and the way delays are handled are also highly significant issues for passengers.

¹ National Rail Passenger Survey- Passenger Focus Autumn 2010

² Passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services- Passenger Focus 2010

Passenger Focus recommends an ongoing review of demand in relation to supply: the adequacy of available and planned provision should be assessed, and adapted as necessary, to inform future rail and transport funding cycles, including potential requirements for investment within new franchise agreements.

Ultimately, the RUS has to determine whether it is possible to create enough capacity on some lines using the existing rights of way. If, as indications suggest, it is not, proposals to address the forecast demand in the longer term need to be formulated. Some elements of this may be outside the control of the rail industry and other stakeholders and decision makers will need to be fully engaged.

Passenger Focus suggests that the allocation of resources will need to be carefully balanced, bearing in mind both the outcomes of financial appraisal and the levels of demand in the short and long term in any given area.

Passenger Focus recommends that government and the industry expedite efforts to co-ordinate strategic planning with the required procurement schemes to deliver the capacity required. The uncertainties about future provision of trains must be addressed.

Delivering more from and through existing plans must be a hallmark of future investment. There should, for example, be an ongoing strategy to link improvements to the capability of slow lines with planned renewals and maintenance. If enhancements can be delivered alongside regular interventions this really should be achievable without the need for significant capital cost expenditure. This should be a marginal incremental cost on top of planned renewals as they arise, over time, and should form an integral part of Network Rail's ongoing strategy for infrastructure.

Long-term strategies should be developed that aim to increase the number of commuter and suburban services that are linked as through routes, thereby increasing their efficiency – and improving connectivity for passengers.

New lines should be designed to avoid the inherent inefficiencies of terminal stations. They would achieve that in a way that would also improve connectivity with London, namely by linking together routes and having stations in London that would be closer to passengers' ultimate destinations

Passenger Focus believes that the final RUS must do more to develop the necessary financial analysis, together with proposals for a phased programme to implement the interventions that offer the best way of meeting the forecast 30% growth in passengers in the morning peaks.

Given that the purpose of the Draft RUS is to plan for 20, or even more, years into the future, it should include a commitment to develop proposals for assessing the benefits to be gained from implementing the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and the capacity improvements proposed.

Given the benefits that would be gained from spreading peak demand over more trains, we suggest the final London & South East RUS should include one measure designed to incentivise passengers that travel in the high peak hour to travel either earlier or later if capacity exists or could be provided.

In Solent and South Hampshire, a wide-ranging review of all the timetables operated on the routes through the region should be undertaken; the many options proposed in this section of the Draft RUS cannot be studied in isolation.

2. Introduction

Passenger Focus welcomes the opportunity to respond to the London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation (the Draft RUS).

Passenger Focus supports the broad objectives behind the RUS process, and welcomes both the formal, and informal, consultative approach adopted by Network Rail. Our membership of the Stakeholder Management Group and both the Central London and the Solent and South Hampshire working groups has been used to provide a passenger voice in discussions on the future of the network in London and the South East, seeking a strategy that will deliver the best outcomes for those who use and pay fares for the rail services delivered on it.

We note the importance of this RUS, as one of a suite of three regional documents,³ building on the framework established in Generation One strategies to plan for the future capacity and investment needs of the rail network in the medium to longer term. There are significant challenges which this RUS has to address.

The impact of the financial constraints facing Britain inevitably places pressures on the funding available for rail. However, we make no apologies for having an aspirational vision of the future of the rail network and emphasise that, as the Draft RUS itself recognises, increases in passenger demand will undoubtedly continue. Any short-term falling off in rates of growth provides a real opportunity to catch up with pressures that have outstripped provision over recent years, investing in infrastructure that will assist with a fuller, faster recovery. This is particularly significant in the economic powerhouse that is London and the South East.

The Passenger Focus response to this consultation is informed by our extensive evidence base, notably detailed information from the National Passenger Survey (NPS)⁴ and research into passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services⁵.

2.1 Structure of this submission

This response to the Draft RUS first sets out evidence from relevant passenger research. We then make some observations about a range of issues pertinent to this RUS, before commenting in more detail on the content of the document.

³ Scotland and Northern Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation - Network Rail, October 2010

⁴ National Rail Passenger Survey- Passenger Focus, Autumn 2010

⁵ Passengers' Priorities for improvements in rail services- Passenger Focus, August 2010

3. Research evidence – Passengers’ key needs

Passengers’ Priorities for improvement

2009	Service Improvement Preference	2007
1	Price of train tickets offer excellent value for money	1
2	At least 19 out of 20 trains arrive on time	3
3	Sufficient train services at times I use the train	2
4	Passengers are always able to get a seat on the train	4
5	Company keeps passengers informed if train delays	5

Passengers in England have been highly consistent in the priorities they identify for rail improvements. In research from both 2007 and 2009 the three top priorities after value for money relate to punctuality, frequency and capacity. Commuters have also been consistent over time, with the same priorities in the top five. However, for commuters in both 2007 and 2009 frequency of service was ranked above punctuality.

This evidence emphasises the importance passengers place on the ‘core product’ and should be a major consideration that influences the final RUS document.

3.1 Drivers of Passenger Satisfaction

NATIONAL PASSENGER SURVEY - WAVE 23 - AUTUMN 2010

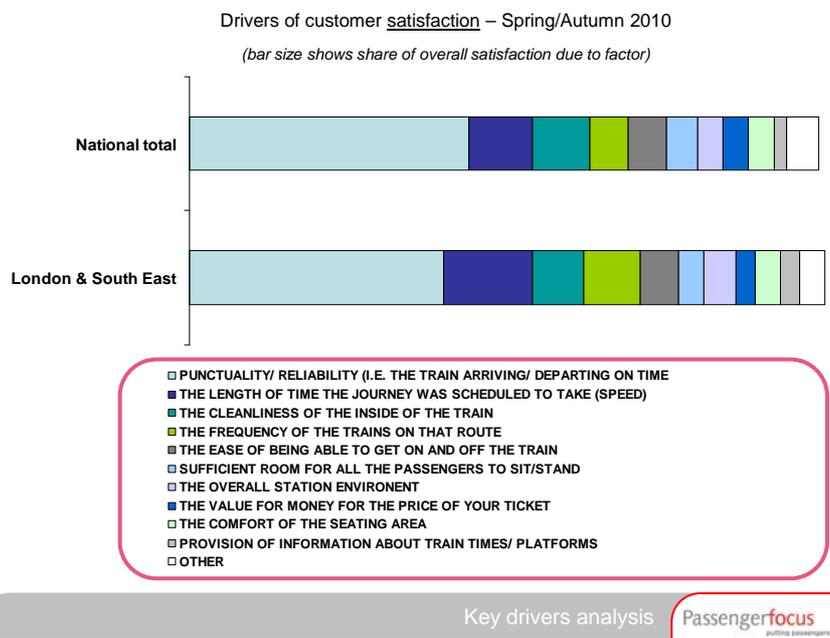


Figure 1

Analysis from the National Passenger Survey (NPS) provides further evidence of the principal concerns of passengers (see Figure 1 above). Punctuality and reliability of train services is the most significant driver of passenger satisfaction. Other key

factors influencing satisfaction are journey time, frequency of trains, ease of getting on and off train (which some passengers regard as a proxy for crowded conditions) and sufficient room for passengers to sit and stand.

Similarly, an analysis of drivers of passenger dissatisfaction reinforces the importance of key factors related to the RUS. After dealing with delays, the next four factors that impact on passenger perceptions are: punctuality and reliability, ease of getting on and off, journey time and sufficient room for passengers (see figure 2 below).

NATIONAL PASSENGER SURVEY - WAVE 23 - AUTUMN 2010

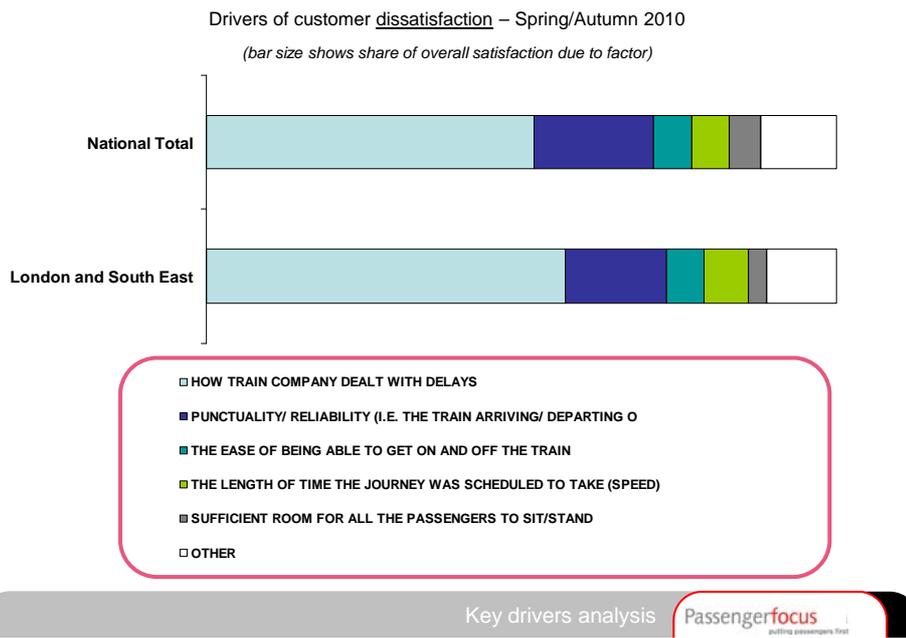


Figure 2

The message for rail industry planners and providers of services is clear: provide regular, punctual, reliable services with good journey times and sufficient capacity to meet needs and passengers will be satisfied. Fail to provide a punctual service with adequate space for passengers and poor responses during delays and passengers will be unhappy.

3.2 Passenger satisfaction in the peak

NPS surveys provide evidence of the perspectives of peak time passengers. Overall satisfaction for this group is generally lower than that of all passengers (73% compared to 83% for autumn 2010). However, there is a notably low level of satisfaction with sufficient room for passengers to sit or stand. This is just 41% for peak passengers and 67% for the overall sample in autumn 2010. This is an issue which the final RUS should seek to address.

Table 1
London and South East - % saying satisfied/good (Peak)

	Spring 2010	Autumn 2010	% change	significant change	% change	significant change
			Since Spring 2010		Since Autumn 2009	
Sample size	3633	3368				
Overall satisfaction	75	73	-2	→	-3	↓
TRAIN FACILITIES						
The frequency of the trains on that route	69	72	2	→	-1	→
Punctuality/reliability (i.e. the train arriving/departing on time)	73	74	1	→	-4	↓
The length of time the journey was scheduled to take (speed)	76	75	-2	→	-3	↓
Connections with other train services	71	71	0	→	-2	→
The value for money for the price of your ticket	29	27	-2	→	1	→
Sufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand	42	41	-1	→	-2	→
How well train company deals with delays	25	26	0	→	0	→

Significance of change	
Not significant	→
Significant decline	↓
Significant improvement	↑

3.3 Value for money

Research into the attributes that drive commuters' perceptions of value for money⁶ also evidences the importance of various factors that the RUS strategy will impact upon. It shows a top five ranking of:

1. Punctuality/reliability of this train
2. Being able to get a seat on the train
3. You are kept informed of delays/journey changes
4. The train is not overcrowded
5. The journey is fast and direct.

3.4 Conclusions from passenger research and implications for the London and South East RUS

Considering all the evidence from the studies above, we can identify a number of first order factors that the RUS must seek to address. These include:

- punctuality and reliability of the trains
- delivery of sufficient capacity, particularly sufficient seats and minimising overcrowding
- adequate frequency of trains to meet passenger needs.

Provision of information, particularly during disruption, and the way delays are handled are also highly significant issues for passengers.

⁶ Fares and Ticketing Study Final Report, Passenger Focus, February 2009

4. Comments on the RUS context

Passenger Focus commends the significant work and analysis that has gone into preparing the draft strategy. The Draft RUS clearly recognises significant existing and future pressures on London and South East corridors. The approach taken by the Draft RUS (taking currently committed schemes and then, generally, proposals contained within existing strategy as the appropriate starting point for addressing future demand) is supported.

There are, however, a number of areas that Passenger Focus wishes to highlight, as some aspects of the Draft RUS will require further development or ongoing review if passenger needs from the rail network are to be adequately addressed over the next two decades.

4.1 Demand forecasting

The Draft RUS has employed a complex combination of methods to model a long-term London-wide forecast of demand. The various drivers of demand have been considered but questions remain about: whether this approach to demand forecasting is sufficiently accurate over the medium to longer term; how anticipated interactions between different modes impact on rail demands, especially if delivery of specific schemes is delayed or cancelled; and how London-wide forecasts play out on individual corridors.

Passenger Focus recommends an ongoing review of demand in relation to supply: the adequacy of available and planned provision should be assessed, and adapted, as necessary to inform future rail and transport funding cycles including potential requirements for investment within new franchise agreements.

4.2 Scope and planning context

The Draft RUS covers a major expanse of the rail network in a vast part of England for a period to 2031 and beyond. Providing a coherent and progressive strategy for such an area is a tremendous challenge. Passengers and stakeholders will expect the gaps identified and options selected for analysis to be considered fully, in conjunction with all other proposals for the areas they serve – housing, employment, retail, leisure, roads and other public transport.

Within the long-term, geographically varied strategy many potential tensions will need to be addressed, including:

- the balance between serving inner-suburban flows and providing sufficient, suitable capacity for outer-suburban or long distance flows
- how provision of multiple alternative terminals impacts on overall capacity
- differentiation of services to address the needs of specific markets

- the most efficient mix of stopping patterns and interchanges.

Ultimately, the RUS has to determine whether it is possible to create enough capacity on some lines using the existing rights of way. If, as indications suggest, it is not, proposals to address the forecast demand in the longer term need to be formulated. Some elements of this may be outside the control of the rail industry and other stakeholders and decision makers will need to be fully engaged.

4.3 Funding and delivery of committed schemes, existing strategy and future requirements

The pressures on funding for rail schemes have long been evident and are now exacerbated by the financial constraints following recession. The extension in delivery of the Thameslink scheme to 2018 is just one example of the lag between anticipated and actual achievement of rail schemes.

The current programme of investment is welcome, as are recent announcements confirming substantial infrastructure and train procurement schemes. With many capacity challenges still to be addressed, however, passengers already enduring overcrowded conditions or, in some instances, actually unable to board trains will ask how long they must wait for improvements that are identifiably needed. This issue will become increasingly resonant as fares rise at a time when there is an increasing risk that there will be insufficient additional resource to deliver a step-change in supply.

The clear recognition in the RUS that investment and delivery will be staged throughout the life of the strategy is appropriate. Passengers travelling today want to see practical measures put in place in the short term and do not want to see the unaffordable ideal be made the enemy of the affordably practicable.

Nevertheless, the lengthy timescales involved in planning and delivery of major infrastructure must not be overlooked. Big projects, particularly, often require extended lead times and the funding of incremental steps in development and delivery.

Passenger Focus suggests that the allocation of resources will need to be carefully balanced, bearing in mind both the outcomes of financial appraisal and the levels of demand in the short and long term in any given area.

4.4 The efficiency agenda

It is entirely correct that the rail industry and all allied partners should be required to drive costs down and demonstrate real efficiency and cost-consciousness in the outputs delivered.

Passenger Focus understands, and supports, the approach taken by RUSs in the way they assess interventions. Simpler, lower cost ones, typically timetabling changes, or small infrastructure changes on the back of renewals, permitting a more reliable service, can often produce genuine improvements. Their low cost and small scale can ensure they can be implemented more quickly and easily. Possibly more important in the current economic climate is the fact that they are more likely to be fundable. Whilst they might not have the glamour and huge impact of large-scale schemes, taken forward steadily as parts of a properly staged programme, they can provide huge benefits for large numbers of passengers.

Delivering more from and through existing plans must be a hallmark of future investment. There should, for example, be an ongoing strategy to link improvements to the capability of slow lines with planned renewals and maintenance. If enhancements can be delivered alongside regular interventions this really should be achievable without the need for significant capital cost expenditure. This should be a marginal incremental cost on top of planned renewals as they arise, over time, and should form an integral part of Network Rail's ongoing strategy for infrastructure.

Expensive and complex schemes can cause considerable disruption to the railway and bring its passengers months, even years, of inconvenience. That need for investment and consequent disruption will have to be faced, however, because there are parts of the railway network in London and the South East where the Draft RUS shows that such schemes will become necessary.

The final report from the McNulty review is still awaited. It will be important to ensure, however, that any decisions deriving from this work retain a strong emphasis on factors that are important to fare-paying passengers. There is a clear sense that the industry must look to address both high costs and inefficiencies before passing any of the 'pain' onto passengers in the form of higher fares or a reduction in services.

4.5 Rolling stock

The delivery of many committed schemes and substantial elements of existing strategy is predicated on the availability of rolling stock. However, the Draft RUS overall is remarkably coy about what rolling stock may be available to deliver the planned capacity.

The consultation document notes:

“Such capacity is therefore part of the baseline even if it is not currently a franchise commitment ... If the additional carriages for the route concerned do not become available as a result of these cascades then it is likely to be a recommendation of future RUSs that the rolling stock be procured by an alternative mechanism.” *Page 46*

Across the entire RUS territory there are many routes where lack of available stock is severely inhibiting the ability to deliver requisite levels of capacity. The tensions

between expectations and practical reality are nowhere starker than in the requirements for diesel trains. The ongoing debate about the extent of electrification does nothing to make the possibility of provision any more secure.

The Draft RUS itself states:

“It is emphasised that many routes have specific restrictions on the types of rolling stock which is suitable for operation over them. For example, the Uckfield line requires additional diesel stock which cannot be assumed to be freed up by a future rolling stock cascade. Operation of longer trains over certain routes is only viable if the stock is equipped with selective door operation [sic] and retrofitting this onto existing trains is generally impracticable.” *Page 59*

Taken together these and other statements in the Draft RUS seem to indicate a very uncertain foundation on which to plan a coherent strategy for meeting passenger demand.

Passenger Focus recommends that government and the industry expedite efforts to co-ordinate strategic planning with the required procurement schemes to deliver the capacity required. The uncertainties about future provision of trains must be addressed.

4.6 The adequacy of the Corridor strategy

The attraction of planning for the long term on a corridor basis is evident. However, this delivers a ‘theoretical’ provision across a broad area but may not address actual passenger needs on specific lines or routes. With complex factors determining where and how people live and work, many passengers’ requirements for travel in the peak hours are tightly prescribed and difficult to alter even in the medium term. Future assessments of demand must recognise the reality of pressures on specific lines.

Passenger Focus recognises the validity of a strategic approach to addressing demand by assessing the ‘size’ of an identified gap. However, this leaves concerns about those corridors where gaps are recognised as existing but priority is given to solutions elsewhere. This suggests very poor prospects for passengers on routes that might be largely overlooked for the next twenty years.

The current lack of adequate options to address some substantial gaps in certain corridors must also be a cause for concern. The commitment to further work during the consultation period, and presumably also beyond, is necessary.

The Draft RUS indicates a risk that, within the timeframe of the strategy, demand may outstrip supply to the extent that solutions beyond capacity increases may have to be considered. In a paragraph on longer-term issues requiring further analysis to identify solutions it states that these include:

“the use of fares and alternative land use policy to distribute passengers, particularly in the high peak hour.” *Page 163*

Passenger Focus would be very concerned if a failure to solve capacity shortfalls resulted in passengers being priced off the trains. We, and passengers, would rightly consider such measures the result of a failure of planning. The economic and social consequences of such a strategy would also be significant.

4.7 Linkages to other proposals

The commentary on gaps and options in section 6 covers many proposals for the medium to long term. However, there are two further proposals relevant to the territory for this RUS on which comment is required.

Chiltern's "inner" stations

One issue that the Evergreen 3 project does nothing to alleviate is the level of train services provided to what could be called Chiltern's "inner" stations – those from West Ruislip inwards to Marylebone. Passenger Focus is aware that our colleagues at London TravelWatch have long proposed that the service level at those stations should be improved to what they call a "metro" level. As the two-track route is a known constraint on future development of Chiltern's long-distance and "outer" services (those as far out as Princes Risborough), we believe the final RUS should acknowledge that options to increase the capacity of that section of line will need to be developed over the next decade.

West Hampstead

For several decades various bodies have suggested that an interchange should be developed at West Hampstead between Chiltern Railways services and the North London Lines and Thameslink. Recent developments in transport provision in London have resulted in new flows, but there are no plans to increase connectivity for the Chiltern line, whose main interchange is with only the Bakerloo Line at Marylebone. Stakeholders, including the London Borough of Camden and London TravelWatch, believe that there is considerable potential in a West Hampstead Interchange, which would require platforms to be constructed on Chiltern's route. If built they would significantly enhance the connectivity of that route with other parts of London, by providing access to the Jubilee, North London and Thameslink lines to Westminster, London Bridge, Canary Wharf, Stratford, Croydon, and Gatwick and Luton Airports. The final RUS should include analysis of such a scheme.

4.8 Demand beyond the peak

The RUS is focused on meeting the capacity challenge during the peak hours. There is a need, however, to consider the direct and consequential impact that weekday peak growth brings on evening and weekend travel demand in an increasingly 24/7 society. This demand cannot be managed by the franchise process. Development

and planning of the infrastructure to accommodate weekend demand needs to be an integral part of the overall process. To not do so is a significant gap in itself.

5. Analysis of gaps and options

5.1 General comments

The Draft RUS is very sparing with detailed financial analysis of options – financial analysis of costs or benefits. Greater financial assessment of proposed options would be expected in a document setting out, according to the best estimates of the rail industry, what a strategy for the next twenty years could be. To a certain extent we are reassured by this from the opening paragraph of the foreword “...it represents our latest analysis...”

Passenger Focus believes that the final RUS must do more to develop the necessary financial analysis, together with proposals for a phased programme to implement the interventions that offer the best way of meeting the forecast 30% growth in passengers in the morning peaks.

The London and South East region is the busiest part of the railway network – rail journeys within London alone are 32.8% of England's total⁷. Measures to accommodate growth of the extent forecast will have to be on a suitably large scale.

London terminal capacity page 27, paragraph 3.2.5 states “...with the railway network as a whole in South East England considered to be very close to running the maximum number of trains achievable with existing infrastructure at peak times.” That appears to be borne out by the performance graphs⁸, which show how the morning peak Public Performance Measure (PPM) is worse than the all day figure for all Train Operating Companies (TOCs) except West Coast and East Coast. Terminal stations are inherently less efficient than through stations.

Long-term strategies should be developed that aim to increase the number of commuter and suburban services that are linked as through routes, thereby increasing their efficiency – and improving connectivity for passengers.

Given the financial constraints that are certain to continue well into the first decade of this RUS, we suggest that it is vital that existing schemes are developed to provide better value for money. That does not mean reducing their scope, but by revising them to provide more benefits. Proposed interventions for the Great Western Main Line (GWML) are but one area where such a philosophy could be implemented.

⁷ National Rail Trends 2009-10 Yearbook Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)

⁸ Figs. 3.1 – 3.12 in the Draft RUS.

5.1.1 Gap A: Reading/outer Thames Valley

Note: all the passenger survey scores in this section of our response come from the latest National Passenger Survey (NPS), which was undertaken in the autumn of 2010.

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- A1 extend Crossrail from Maidenhead to Reading
- A2 increase peak IEP⁹ service from 15 to 16 trains per hour
- A3 lengthen peak IEP trains
- A4 4 per hour 12 car peak "shuttles" outer Thames Valley/Reading additional
- A5 as A4, but HEX¹⁰ combined with Crossrail, still on main lines
- A6 as A4, but HEX combined with Crossrail, using relief lines - at least in peaks.

There is considerable overlap between them, and option A1 is required for option A6 to be feasible, therefore we discuss them as a group. We understand that options A2 to 5 have been more or less discounted and that further development work during the consultation period is concentrating on options A1 and A6.

The scores in **Table 2** show how that just over a third of passengers on Great Western's Thames Valley routes are not satisfied by the capacity provided, and over a quarter of those on its long-distance routes. The score for the ease of joining/leaving trains on long-distance routes could be influenced by the fact that train doors on those routes require the passengers to open them. On the Thames Valley route, where most trains have power-operated doors, the score could be influenced by the levels of crowding on the trains. It is clear that passengers on Thames Valley routes are not as satisfied with the frequency of their trains, which again is likely to influence the score for "sufficient room". The scores suggest that current capacity is far from matching the number of passengers travelling.

Table 2 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for GWML journeys

%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	connections with other rail services	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
GW long distance	73	76	76	86	79	85	55
GW Thames Valley peak	45	71	74	70	75	77	37
GW Thames Valley	68	78	73	71	79	84	52

⁹ Intercity Express Programme, the next generation of inter-city trains.

¹⁰ Heathrow Express, the non-stop Paddington to Heathrow Airport service, operated by BAA.

off-peak							
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We agree that the extension of Crossrail services to Reading makes good sense operationally and believe that it also would benefit passengers as well as being necessary as part of option A6. However, the final pattern of services must be developed in full consultation with passengers to recognise and, as far as possible, accommodate their aspirations. Over the past decade or so journey times and the number of station stops have increased for stations whose off-peak service runs on the relief lines. If the service provided when Crossrail has opened is as described in option A1, the implications are that the present timetable pattern would be maintained. Passengers from Reading to London would not use these services in sufficient numbers to reduce the peak capacity gap.

One option not considered is that of increasing the very restricted function of Crossrail – in effect an all-stations inner suburban service – which could potentially be revised to transform it into a useful inter-regional through London link on the Thameslink model. Fast services from Reading and beyond on the Great Western lines proposed for electrification could be able to use the Crossrail route through London, benefiting passengers by improving connectivity and also by reducing the number of passengers who have to interchange at Paddington.

The Draft RUS forecasts a gap in 2031 of 5200 seats on London long distance and outer suburban services into Paddington. Depending on the type of train, that equates to a shortfall of up to 10 trains. It is clear that one additional train per peak hour does not meet that need.

We note the comment in option A3 about lengthening inter-city trains from Swansea and Bristol so that they provide enough capacity for passengers from Reading and its implication of inefficiency. We raise here the desirable aim of meeting the needs of differing markets by providing bespoke services. If discrete markets and flows are large enough, then, as far as is possible and economic, they should have their own services.

Option A4 recognises the issues raised in our previous comment and proposes a peak shuttle service which would provide additional capacity. Its suggestion that some inter-city services could omit calls at Reading, however, ignores the reduction in frequency that would result for passengers travelling to that town. The additional infrastructure required to allow the operation of 24 trains per hour is considerable, with the potential for disruption whilst the widening works between Airport Junction and Ladbroke Grove are carried out. If that increase in capacity is physically possible then, as it is likely to be required eventually, a scheme to provide it should be developed.

If the four trains were operated through to Crossrail the need for more platforms capable of accommodating 12-car trains at Paddington would not arise.

The difficulty of handling parallel crossing moves between main, relief and Crossrail tracks in the Ladbroke Grove/Westbourne Park area, even with grade-separated

junctions, is noted in the assessment of option A5. We suggest, however, a junction can be designed that avoids the need for such moves.

Passenger Focus agrees that option A6 (including A1) is the best of those proposed to meet the gap in capacity on the Great Western Main Line (GWML), because it requires the least additional infrastructure and therefore can be achieved at lower cost and with the least disruption to passengers. The indicative peak main lines service specification offers a good pattern of services, bearing in mind our comments about matching services to markets. However:

- there is no indication in the Draft RUS of how many additional seats would be provided
- there is no definitive list of what must be considered during further development work
- there is no indication of how the additional rolling stock will be used in the off-peak.

Paragraphs 7.4.9 to 7.4.12 briefly discuss aspects of the proposed interventions and other issues relevant to the GWML. We agree that the disadvantage of “relatively minor journey time disbenefits for ...Heathrow Airport travellers” should be compared to the benefits of improved connectivity, which could negate any longer journey time between Paddington and Heathrow Airport. Given the time spent by international air passengers at airports one must question what impact five to ten minutes additional rail journey time might have.

The additional capacity that will be provided by Chiltern Railways’ Oxford to Marylebone service will undoubtedly reduce demand for the service to Paddington, and work should be done to assess its impact and to see if it could provide more of the capacity required from Oxford. Fewer passengers boarding GW services at Oxford would create more capacity for passengers from the Cotswold line.

Passenger Focus suggests the possibilities of further interventions are explored:

- Consider whether there are possibilities to adapt Crossrail to enhance value for the region and its economy and effectiveness for more passengers. This could include the potential to be achieved by adding inter-regional services from places such as Newbury and Oxford, bringing the benefits of through services to the City of London to more passengers. It may also permit more efficient use of Crossrail and of Paddington, by removing some interchanging passengers and freeing-up platform space.
- Grade separated junctions between main, relief and Crossrail lines are likely to be a pre-requisite of transforming Crossrail. If the maximum use is to be made of existing rights of way, plans to meet demand twenty and more years into the future must be developed as part of this RUS.
- The rolling stock required to operate a fully developed Crossrail suggests it may need to be designed to meet two discrete markets – short distance, high-

density metro flows, and inter-regional longer-distance flows. One size does not fit all, but equally the rolling stock should not be one-off designs, but rather generic types, to help keep production costs as low as possible by economies of scale, and avoiding additional design costs.

5.1.2 Gap B: East Coast Mainline (ECML) - London approaches

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- B1 extend busiest East Coast (EC) electric trains to run as 10 cars, plus DVT
- B2 replace EC electric sets with IEP
- B3 run seven trains per hour in alternate hours off-peak
- B4 ERTMS to create additional paths
- B5 four-tracking through Welwyn North.

There is considerable overlap between them, therefore we discuss them as a group.

The reconfiguration of the Mark IV fleet of electric trains to a mixture of eight- and 10-car is well-meaning, but flawed. Whilst, in theory, it would better match train length to passenger demand, the Draft RUS notes disadvantages:

- more complex timetabling
- increased journey times.

We would add at least two more:

- the likelihood of an eight-car train being used on a train booked for 10 cars
- the reduced capacity for growth on services operated with eight cars.

On this route the NPS scores for “sufficient room” for East Coast (EC) and First Capital Connect (FCC) show that over a quarter of EC passengers, and nearly two fifths of FCC passengers, are dissatisfied by the capacity of the trains. In the peak, only 36% of FCC passengers are satisfied by the capacity on the trains. EC’s score for frequency is 90%, much higher than FCC’s 78% in the peak hours, suggesting that improving the frequency of FCC services is more important – at present – than improving the frequency of EC services, which will improve with the new timetable in May 2011.

Table 3 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for ECML journeys

%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
East Coast ¹¹	72	82	90	76	90	57
FCC (GN)	61	81	75	77	86	43
FCC (GN) peak	36	75	78	71	85	27

¹¹ East of England/East Midlands: stations Peterborough to Retford; journeys to/from London only

As the “inter-city 125” High Speed Trains (HST) used on the ECML are already 30 years old their replacement is certainly due. The Mark IV electric fleet will be due for replacement before 2031. Their replacements must be comfortable and welcoming and be of a type that will permit the maintenance of existing through services; they must also be capable of allowing additional through services to those places where there is viable demand, but do not require the use of nine-or ten-car trains.

As passenger numbers increase beyond the capacity of the existing number of trains in the timetable it is essential that longer trains, or more trains, are operated. We are pleased to learn in option B3 that seven long-distance trains per hour can be operated on the ECML, but disappointed that it is possible only in alternate off-peak hours. However, we are aware that the needs of all users of the route have to be considered. Therefore it is essential to assess and develop other schemes that could add capacity for all the passengers (and freight trains) on the route.

The wider grounds for implementing the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS), such as cost and maintainability and faster journey times, are good reasons for its adoption. We note in option B4 that ERTMS at present offers only minimal additional track capacity, and would have to be accompanied by other interventions such as changes to the timetable structure and the removal of other constraints such as platform capacity at Kings Cross and the two track section through Welwyn North.

Given that the purpose of the Draft RUS is to plan for 20, or even more, years into the future, it should include a commitment to develop proposals for assessing the benefits to be gained from implementing ERTMS and the capacity improvements proposed. We discuss ERTMS again in our comments on option D2.

Passenger Focus notes the comments in the assessment of option B5, and concurs that, if only two additional long-distance paths each hour would be created it is not value for money. We agree with the recommendation that land should be protected, but point out that a bungalow¹² owned by BRBR and bought in expectation of widening works was the subject of consultation in August/September 2010 with the intention of selling it.

This is a small example of the imperative that strategic long-term planning must involve all departments, with all the inter-relationships that could affect any detail of proposals identified, in order to avoid unnecessary risks to, and inefficiencies in, schemes. On the macro-scale, it is equally imperative that, if the capacity of the existing railway is to be expanded to the maximum possible extent, all the possible interventions are analysed to find the most effective synergies between them. Passengers will expect the best and most efficient scheme is developed to meet this gap.

¹² 11, St. Ives Close.

5.1.3 Gap C: Lea Valley corridor

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- C1 no additional infrastructure, additional two trains per hour
- C2 four-tracking and additional trains
- C3 additional infrastructure Tottenham Hale/Coppermill Junc., more trains than option C1
- C4 additional infrastructure Tottenham Hale/Angel Road, Stratford to Angel Road shuttle more trains than option C1
- C5 additional infrastructure Broxbourne, more trains than option C1
- C6 peak Hertford East trains lengthened from 8 to 12 cars
- C7 extend West Anglia - Stratford trains to Liverpool Street.

Table 4 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for West Anglia¹³ peak journeys

%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	connections with other rail services	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
West Anglia	27	65	51	59	76	67	20
Stansted Express	32	67	77	94	90	76	27

The scores in the table above show the low levels of passenger satisfaction with services on the Lea Valley corridor. They are amongst the lowest in London and the South East, and a clear indication that more capacity is urgently required.

Option C1 would add two trains per hour between Hertford East/Broxbourne and Stratford, and the assessment concludes that it would be possible, albeit with some adjustment to the current stopping patterns. Whilst we are pleased that the connectivity to Stratford will be improved, and capacity will be increased to Tottenham Hale, we seek assurance that crowding will be at acceptable levels throughout to Liverpool Street. The demand generated could provide evidence of the value of option C2, with its long list of additional infrastructure required to four-track the Broxbourne Junction to Coppermill Junction section of route. In effect, C2 is a combination of options C3 – C5.

The low satisfaction with frequency on the Lea Valley corridor - only 68%, as low as ScotRail's rural routes – is an indication that the greater frequencies four-tracking would make possible for local stations are very necessary. We agree that the option should be developed, and accept that its cost is likely to be high. It could be possible to add the infrastructure required for option C2 incrementally; option C3 could be the first stage in a phased scheme leading to eventual four-tracking north from Tottenham Hale. Options C4 and C5, in effect, represent further phases to complete option C2. The works described in option C5 are recommended for further

¹³ These services are operated by National Express East Anglia.

development and, as its benefits are greater, should precede C3 if a staged approach is taken to improving capacity and capability of the lea Valley corridor.

The assessment of option C6 does not provide much detail – “certain stations”, “dependent on calling pattern” are unhelpful phrases, and the conclusion that longer trains from Hertford East are “potentially required if other options (are) not implemented” is too indefinite. The final RUS should come to a definite conclusion about the value or otherwise of the option.

Passenger Focus notes the prerequisites for the implementation of option C7, in particular that it should not prevent the resolution of options D1 or D3. The final RUS should show the analysis of how the three options interact; whether they are mutually exclusive, or whether they can be adopted in combination and still provide worthwhile additional capacity.

5.1.4 Gap D: Great Eastern Main Line (GEML)

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- D1 run additional outer Great Eastern services into Liverpool Street using the capacity freed by Crossrail
- D2 implement ERTMS on Great Eastern Main Line to create additional paths
- D3 run three additional main line trains per hour into Liverpool Street.

Table 5 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for GEML peak journeys

%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
East Anglia Inter-city	54	74	89	65	73	21
East Anglia Mainline	41	82	62	76	75	19
East Anglia Metro	38	69	73	74	71	14

The modelled shortfall of 4,200 seats in the busiest peak hour by 2031 highlights the need to increase capacity on the route from Liverpool Street through Shenfield, and Colchester, and its branches. When the low scores for capacity on the Mainline and Metro services, only 41% and 38% satisfaction, are considered, it is clear that significant extra capacity must be provided to meet demand and forecast growth. The Draft RUS comments that the “standard RUS toolkit” will only go so far and that more, longer trains with “high density seating” – three words that fill us and passengers with dread – are the end of the line. We note that there is no mention of running 16-car trains, as there is in option F3 for the South West Mainline (SWML). If it has been discounted as an option because, for example, it is impossible to provide platforms that are sufficiently long to accommodate 16 cars, the Draft RUS should have stated that. The Draft RUS is very coy about what might be done when all the tools have been used; passengers will expect the final RUS to have made up its mind just what the “more complex changes” need to be.

Option D1 proposes using platform space at Liverpool Street released by services diverted onto Crossrail, but that is all the diverted services will create - platform space - not any worthwhile additional track capacity. Consequently we agree with the assessment that additional infrastructure would be required before the number of trains can be increased on the fast lines.

Option D2 concludes that the ERTMS and automatic train control together might provide more paths than the one every two minutes that is currently possible. However, the existing route must be used to the maximum possible extent, and so assessment of train control systems must be made, to investigate whether it is

possible to reliably deliver sub two-minute headways. If it is possible, they will only be useful if the additional infrastructure can be provided.

The potential scale of that additional infrastructure, and changes to existing infrastructure, is touched on by the assessment of option D3. We are forced to ponder over the law of diminishing returns, which could result in the costs of creating the capacity to run three additional trains per hour being unjustifiable. Passengers using trains on the routes¹⁴ from Ipswich, Harwich, Walton, Clacton and Braintree give service frequency a satisfaction score of only 64%, and those routes and the line from Southend Victoria¹⁵ share a capacity rating of 61% satisfied. Passengers expect capacity to match demand, but is taking the existing railway to the very limits of sustainable operation the only way to do so?

The final RUS, proposing interventions for the period to 2031, must include details of a “robust means of increasing capacity on the GEML” and what “significant additional infrastructure” is likely to be required to provide it.

¹⁴ The routes described as “Mainline” in table 5

¹⁵ The route described as “Metro” in table 5.

5.1.5 Gap E: Brighton Main Line (BML)

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- E1 run additional trains into London Bridge over and above planned Thameslink total
- E2 implement ERTMS on Brighton Main Line to create additional paths
- E3 new tunnel from outer London to create more paths on Brighton line
- E4 construct new "BML2" avoiding LGW and East Croydon.

This gap notes that standing for well over 20 minutes will still occur on the Brighton Main Line (BML) even after all planned interventions to increase capacity are taken into account. Passengers will expect measures more realistic than juggling with various combinations of seating and standing space. They will also expect punctuality and reliability to be improved from current levels. The latest NPS "room to sit or stand", ease of joining/leaving trains, punctuality and value for money scores for Thameslink and Southern's services on this route are shown in table 6.

Table 6 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for BML peak journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
Southern Sussex Coast		34	70	66	85	85	32
First Capital Connect South		17	34	76	54	76	18

They provide a very clear indication that passengers want improvements, which the options selected to meet this gap, must be able to provide. The assessment of option E1 that the current timetable is at the limits of robust operation is apparently reflected by the low scores for punctuality. The option's conclusion that more trains will require additional infrastructure is shared with many other options in the Draft RUS.

We suggest that the final RUS develops the hint contained in paragraph 7.8.5 of a ranking of interventions, and provides a table of all the additional infrastructure that would be necessary, together with analysis of likely costs, benefits and how implementation could be staged.

Option E2 comes to the same conclusion as D2, that ERTMS, currently, would not fill the gap. We comment in more detail in our response to option D2.

New lines will release capacity on existing routes, as well as adding the new capacity of the new lines themselves, but must be associated with additional capacity at stations, particularly terminal stations. St. Pancras International's domestic High Speed platforms are already a limiting factor in any proposals for future development of those services. Consequently new lines should be designed to avoid the inherent inefficiencies of terminal stations. They would achieve that in a way that would also

improve connectivity with London, namely by linking together routes and having stations in London that would be closer to passengers' ultimate destinations. For example, a new BML could serve Victoria, Charing Cross/Waterloo and London Bridge as part of a link with a new line from Kent. The benefits would therefore include:

- reduced end-to-end journey times
- reduced need for interchange
- reduced interchange onto the Underground
- no need to work rolling stock out of terminal platforms
- more efficient empty stock working.

We note that Option E3 concludes that costs make unlikely the construction of any new line in the lifetime of the RUS. However, given the long lead-times, planning should start almost immediately, and must assure that contacts with the planning authorities along potential routes are created and that the necessary safeguards are agreed for any land required.

The assessment of option E4 concludes that a new "BML2" would not be viable without additional tracks into London Bridge, would not serve Haywards Heath, Gatwick Airport or East Croydon and would extend other journey times beyond those on the current route. This would appear to be a poor second to Option E3.

We note, and agree with, the comments about the need to ensure that any excess capacity in the shoulder peaks is used "effectively". Spreading demand is obviously one way of achieving that, and proponents of "smart" ticketing tell us that such systems are a way of doing that, for example by permitting variable daily amounts to be charged for journeys. Research carried out in 2006 for Passenger Focus¹⁶ asked groups of passengers what would incentivise them to travel at off-peak times, and the likelihood of those passengers changing their travel behaviour. 56% of those questioned said that reducing fares by 25-30% would be a way. However, longer distance commuters were less likely to travel earlier, and many felt that earlier arrivals in the morning could not be matched by earlier afternoon departures.

Staggered or flexible working hours are examples of changes to employment that are outside the railway's control, although the passengers interviewed felt that the rail industry should do more to educate employers about the benefits of flexitime.

Given the benefits that would be gained from spreading peak demand over more trains, we suggest the final London & South East RUS should include one measure designed to incentivise passengers that travel in the high peak hour to travel either earlier or later, if capacity exists or could be provided.

¹⁶ 'Edge of morning peak' travel; Consolidated for Passenger Focus, May 2006.

5.1.6 Gap F: South West Main Line (SWML)

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- F1 twelve-car inner-suburban trains
- F2 double-deck trains on the outer services
- F3 run sixteen- car trains into Waterloo International
- F4 4 additional trains per hour on the main lines into Waterloo.

There is considerable overlap between them, therefore we will discuss them as a group.

The NPS scores for the two groups of services¹⁷ that operate on the South West Main Line (SWML) both show dissatisfaction with the capacity provided, particularly on “suburban”¹⁸ and West of England¹⁹ services. The shortfall of 6,100 seats in the busiest morning peak hour by 2031 clearly needs attention, with schemes that will add to capacity without reducing the good scores for punctuality. The low scores for “room to sit/stand” no doubt influence the scores for frequency, with passengers unable to travel on less crowded trains because there simply is no alternative at times they need to travel.

Table 7 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for SWML peak suburban journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
London		34	70	66	85	85	32
Metro		46	59	87	82	85	32
Suburban		46	78	83	87	86	16

Table 8 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for SWML peak longer distance journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
Portsmouth		34	85	92	86	65	8
West of England		35	78	93	93	93	18

It is because of the very low score – only 46% satisfied with capacity on South West Trains (SWT) suburban services, that we are concerned by the Draft RUS’s comment that the “modelled gap is on outer suburban rather than inner suburban services.” The results show that more capacity must be provided on all the routes of SWT’s mainland²⁰ network. We are pleased that the Draft RUS has reappraised the option of operating 12-car trains on inner suburban services, though disappointed by the

¹⁷ Those in the London suburban area, and those beyond that, to Portsmouth, Exeter and Weymouth.

¹⁸ Stations in the Woking area.

¹⁹ Stations Basingstoke to Exeter.

²⁰ In the interests of completeness, we must point out that “room to sit/stand” scored only 79% on the Island Line.

number of costly interventions it describes as necessary. We are, however, pleased that option F1 is to be kept under review. Any review must consider the truly long-term, with a comprehensive study of how the benefits a completely new alignment would provide could be maximised.

A major problem with extensive infrastructure projects such as creating a 12-car inner suburban network (option F1) and providing clearances for double-deck trains (option F2) is the disruption to the service during the works. The project to increase the capacity of the West Coast Main Line (WCML) took years longer than expected, and is still not complete as originally planned. The implications of implementing a series of piece-meal schemes – two other major infrastructure projects suggested for the SWML are a grade separated junction to take trains from the main lines to the Windsor Lines so the five ex-Eurostar platforms at Waterloo can be used by 16-car trains, and a grade separation of Woking Junction – are disruption and, ironically, **reduced** capacity along much of the route for many years.

Until any completely new route can be built – probably well after 2031 – every effective intervention should be thoroughly investigated, and implemented if value for money. Maximum use of the existing infrastructure and its capacity must be achieved before new lines can be justified; we therefore agree that option four should be developed further. At the same time, it is clear from the assessments of the options for the SWML that expanding its capacity will in a few years' time become possible only at huge expense. The Draft RUS should provide estimates of the costs of the “mega-projects” and the value of the benefits they would bring. It should also provide estimates of the costs and benefits of a new route. We suggest the time to consider new routes has come; if proved to be beneficial to the region's economy and society, the long planning and construction times require assessment and a decision as soon as practicable.

5.1.7 Gap G: Windsor Lines

Options in the Draft RUS to meet this gap are:

- G1 17 trains per hour on the Windsor Lines
- G2 18 trains per hour in the peaks on the Windsor Lines
- G3 12 car trains on the Windsor Lines
- G4 Reconfigure Waterloo to Barnes Junction to allow more trains to be run.

Table 9 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for SWT Windsor Lines peak journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
Windsor/Reading		42	65	82	86	76	34
London ²¹		34	70	66	85	85	32

We note the comments in the Draft RUS regarding the size of the gap on the Windsor Lines, estimated to be “700 passengers”, and that demand is suppressed by the current capacity. It is clear from the score in **Table 9**, above, that satisfaction with the current capacity on the route is low. It is also clear that any intervention must be able to meet not just the current capacity gap, but also the suppressed demand. The operational difficulties of the route, not least of which is the long-standing²² problem of the level crossings, are greater than on many other suburban routes. The assessment of options G1 and G2 – respectively 17/18 trains per hour at peak times – includes provision for Airtrack services. Existing passengers will need to be reassured that their interests have been considered. However, it is vital that such proposals for significant increases in connectivity are included in the assessments of options for the Draft RUS.

Both the options require the re-commissioning of the disused International platforms at Waterloo before they can be implemented; such a valuable asset should be returned to use as soon as possible so that passengers can benefit. The additional trains over mostly double-track routes will add to the difficulty of operating the existing mix of stopping and semi-fast trains and leads to the conclusion that they are part of, not the whole, solution. Passenger Focus is somewhat taken aback that the Draft RUS is uncertain in its conclusion - both options are only “likely” to be recommended. We believe that they provide additional capacity in an incremental way that will permit further interventions.

If the maximum use is to be made of the existing railway rights of way infrastructure works will necessarily be part of the proposed options. The development of interventions chosen for the SWML must approach new infrastructure projects in a holistic way; that is, on a network basis with a carefully considered phasing of projects to ensure synergies drive the best possible value for money and fastest

²¹ Stations Clapham Junction to Waterloo inclusive.

²² Local frustrations are evident, for example, in this comment from the web site www.Egham-airtrack.co.uk “...have we spent the past 8 years talking to a brick wall about the Pooley Green crossing?”

implementation. Given the need to keep all options open, we agree with the conclusion that option G3 should be kept under review, with other options designed to accommodate longer platforms where required.

By increasing capacity in a staged programme every opportunity can be taken to ensure “future-proofing” of infrastructure works to facilitate additional capacity. The assessment of option G4 recognises that, and concludes that the works required to run more than 17 trains per hour “should be considered at time (sic) of London Waterloo resignalling”. We agree and suggest that the final RUS should include a draft programme of the “significant additional infrastructure” (11.2.2 in the Draft RUS) required to develop the SWML to the maximum possible extent.

5.1.8 Gap H: Elephant & Castle corridor

Option H1 Implement 9, 10 or 12 car trains on the Wimbledon Loop

Growth of 20% by 2031 is estimated to occur in the number of passengers on services in the morning peak through Elephant & Castle station. Table 7.1 shows a capacity shortfall for 900 passengers on the route in the busiest hour of the morning peak. A journey from Mitcham Eastfields to Blackfriars takes longer than the twenty-minute threshold for standing. Passengers should be able to choose whether they sit or stand for their journey. Many people stand out of choice when making short journeys on “metro” services. Others are prepared to stand for a short journey, but prefer to sit. Some passengers find standing extremely difficult for various medical reasons. Rolling stock “similar to that used by London Overground” might be higher density – in effect, have more standing space and fewer seats – but removes the standing/sitting choice for more passengers. Some passengers will find it hard to accept that removing seats from trains on routes where most journeys are longer than 20 minutes is a valid response to overcrowding.

The assessment of this option to lengthen trains lists significant infrastructure works that would be required to enable trains longer than eight cars to operate, and advises that selective door operation (SDO) is unlikely to be practical. It concludes that costs of the necessary works would be high, without undertaking any analysis. We believe it is unsatisfactory for a twenty-year strategy not to have clear statements about how it will take forward evaluation of projects to meet identified gaps.

We have searched for details of the “long-term aspiration for a southern extension to the ...Bakerloo Line, extending this route via Camberwell into south east London²³...” All the details in the public domain are very vague; only one of the three options found²⁴ would route an extended Bakerloo Line via Herne Hill, and it is said to be the least effective in meeting the transport needs of that part of south-east London. A recent report²⁵ prepared for Lewisham Council shows that there is considerable lobbying for a Bakerloo extension to head south-east rather than south from its current terminus at the Elephant & Castle. The diagram²⁶ below indicates a possible route via Herne Hill, which would provide additional capacity for passengers from Tulse Hill and Herne Hill. (Note the misspelling of Gipsy Hill is their error.)

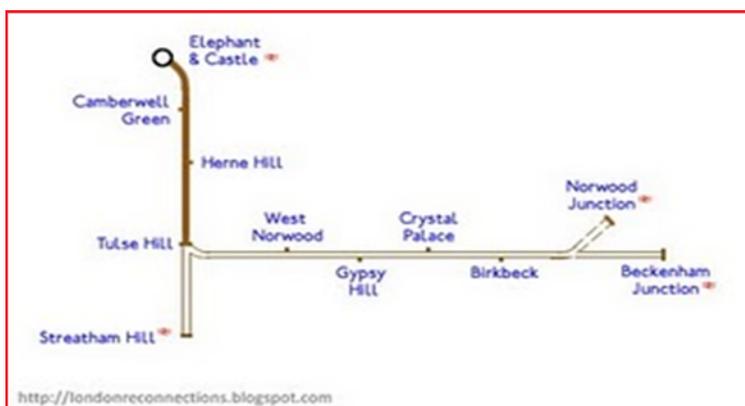
²³ London and South East Draft RUS for consultation page 100- Network Rail December 2010

²⁴ In www.londonreconnections.blogspot.com

²⁵ Potential options for Bakerloo Line extension towards SE London, JRC Jonathan Roberts Consulting, Sep. 2010

²⁶ From www.londonreconnections.blogspot.com unattributed source

Figure 3. One indicative route for the proposed Bakerloo Line extension



Passenger Focus believes that the implications of not providing the additional capacity required – 900 seats in the busiest morning peak hour according to table 7.1 in the Draft RUS – are that passengers on the route will experience unacceptable conditions. Table 10 shows the scores for relevant factors in the latest NPS.

Table 10 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for Elephant & Castle corridor peak journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease on/off	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
Thameslink Loop		50	69	60	58	73	36
Southern Metro		45	69	67	78	81	36

The railway industry must develop the interventions proposed in this option to overcome the difficulties, and ensure they include a thorough assessment of the potential of a Bakerloo Line extension via Herne Hill to provide the necessary additional capacity to fill this gap.

5.1.9 Gap I: Orbital routes

Option I1 increase West London Line to WCML peak service to two trains per hour

The scores given by passengers on the West London Line (WLL) are recorded in the two sets of figures in the table below. It must be noted that both sets also include other routes, which introduces a need for some caution.

Table 11 Autumn 2010 NPS scores for WLL journeys

	%	room to sit/stand	ease of on/off	connection with other rail	frequency	punctuality	journey time	VFM
London Overground ²⁷		56	74	71	64	64	82	58
Southern Metro ²⁸		70	77	73	68	78	85	45

We note the comments in the assessment of this option. Passengers will be extremely disappointed that, even with further development, the best that can be hoped for is that the existing gap of 72 minutes (departures from Milton Keynes Central at 7.01, then 8.13, Mondays to Fridays) will be reduced to 60 minutes. Passengers will not understand why the timetable cannot provide trains at regular intervals, or why trains cannot be longer and provide more seats. However, we are pleased to read in the WCML Draft RUS that further work is recommended to identify an operationally viable solution for two trains an hour, which “will be presented in the final RUS publication.” We understand that to mean the work, rather than the viable solution, but hope to be mistaken.

The Passengers in Excess of Capacity (PiXC) measure means that, for example, a passenger should expect to be seated for the journey from Wembley Central to West Brompton. Table 3.19 in the West Coast Main Line Draft RUS shows that in 2009/10, southbound, all three peak hours trains have crowding over 100%, with one loaded to over 140% of capacity from Watford Junction to West Brompton. It is clear that additional capacity is required now.

Option I2 lengthen Southern West London Line services to eight cars

The assessment of this option shows a BCR of 4.2, described as very good value for money, even though platform extensions are required at four stations. Passengers will agree, and expect Southern’s services between Milton Keynes and East Croydon

²⁷ Includes North London Line as well as West London Line

²⁸ Includes all Southern suburban services

(including the various “short” workings) to be lengthened as soon as rolling stock becomes available. However, there is severe overcrowding already, and the comment that additional stock is likely to be linked with new Thameslink rolling stock is unacceptable. Orders have not yet been placed for any, therefore the timescale for the provision of additional rolling stock is years in the future; passengers will expect real plans to be developed to overcome the shortage much sooner than that.

They will also expect another option to finding an alternative turnback location to using platform 2A at Milton Keynes Central because it is long enough for only four-car trains. The implication is clear – that on this route trains would not operate to Milton Keynes Central. If alternative platforms at Milton Keynes Central cannot be used, the trains’ length could be reduced by detaching/attaching a unit at a station such as Tring, which has turnback facilities.

5.2 Network connectivity

Our comments on the content of this section of the Draft RUS will be limited to those specific issues that we believe are of particular concern to passengers. Passenger Focus looks forward to helping with the consultation process with passengers and potential passengers for new rail links that are chosen for development.

5.2.1 Gap J Access to London Heathrow Airport

There is no doubt that Heathrow Airport is a large market that existing rail links do not serve in a comprehensive way. The average daily number of passengers in 2009 was 180,000, and 77,000 people are employed at the airport²⁹.

A major shortcoming of the existing rail links to Heathrow is that both of them serve places to the east. The Heathrow Express service, although fast, only provides a through service to Paddington, with intermediate stations served by Heathrow Connect. It is clear that rail could provide much better connectivity to Heathrow. Two schemes are offering links to the GWML and the Windsor Lines of South West Trains (SWT), Airtrack and the Windsor Link Railway. Between them they would provide through services, or “one-change” journeys from a very large area of the Home Counties, the West of England and South Wales. They would provide airport workers with a very real alternative to driving to work, as well as benefit many existing passengers.

We note proposals (figure 8.1 in the Draft RUS) to run two Crossrail services an hour beyond terminal 5 to Staines as part of the Airtrack network. The Windsor Link offers the prospect of a link not just to Heathrow, but also between the GWML and the SWT network.

We note that such schemes offer benefits to those who need to travel to and from Heathrow, and also increase the number of rail links throughout that part of the South East. Passenger Focus’s role will be that of the “interested observer” until proposals are developed to the extent that requires passenger representation.

5.2.2 Gap K maximizing the benefits of Crossrail

We agree that the benefits of Crossrail should be increased. Current timetable plans show that more than half the trains will not operate west of Paddington, which offers scope to serve additional destinations. We have commented in the section on the GWML on the proposals to operate Heathrow Express services as part of Crossrail, and have suggested that other services could be routed onto Crossrail with benefits for passengers and the taxpayer.

We also agree with the conclusions in the review of options (table 8.2 in the Draft RUS), that the most productive and feasible option would be to link Crossrail to the WCML, which would provide additional connectivity and reduce the amount of interchange at Euston. It would also go some way to correcting the decision that Crossrail should not be routed via Euston. We believe that there must be extensive

²⁹ Figures from www.heathrowairport.com

consultation with passengers to find out what their requirements are, so that the service pattern developed best matches demand.

5.2.3 Gap L future Crossrail 2 Chelsea to Hackney

We are concerned to see that figure 8.2 in the Draft RUS shows what it describes as “Crossrail 2” as linking the District Line’s Wimbledon branch to the Central Line at Leytonstone. It is apparent that a lot more work is necessary to develop this proposal and demonstrate how it will provide real benefits for passengers. We do note that it has been considered as a solution to the remaining capacity gaps on the GEML and SWML, and agree that routing the safeguarded alignment via Euston should be considered.

5.2.4 Gap M Implications of HS2 on the London area

If a station on HS2 at Old Oak Common were to be built it appears logical that one should be built on Crossrail, to provide links towards the west, and also to offer an interchange for passengers bound for those parts of London that will be served by Crossrail. There are clear implications for capacity on the GWML; stopping trains takes up track capacity, as well as lengthening journey times. Stops on the relief lines would be more easily accommodated than stops on the main lines. We note the comment in the Draft RUS that long distance services would “(not) generally call”, but point out that platforms will surely have to be built on the main lines, for use when the relief lines are blocked for whatever reason. With them there, resisting pressure for long distance services to call might be difficult.

It is clear that pressure for stations on the Richmond line, and the West London Line could be strong, with the area becoming a major centre for development and a considerable destination in its own right. The long-term implications for services serving it are massive and will need comprehensive and wide-ranging investigation by all those charged with planning the infrastructure and economic development of the area.

5.2.5 Gap N Capacity implications of HS1 to HS2 link

Passenger Focus is concerned by the implication that the heavily-used North London Line could have to find paths for international high-speed services travelling between HS1 and HS2. Passengers are only just enjoying the benefits of improvements to frequencies and train capacity along this route and will not be willing to see them affected in years to come by demands for paths for international services. We agree that the connection between the two high-speed lines should be considered early in the planning of HS2.

5.2.6 Gap O Other connectivity schemes

We believe that the East West Rail and Croxley Link both offer significant additional benefits to existing passengers through increased connectivity.

- Buckinghamshire County Council has plans to improve the links between the north of the county and the parts of it served by the two lines southwards from Aylesbury, which build on the opportunities that east west rail would create

- The Croxley Link would improve access to and from the WCML at Watford Junction, and could provide an alternative route for passengers should the WCML be blocked for any reason south of Watford Junction.

6. Solent and South Hampshire

Passenger Focus notes the specific features of the region covered by this section of the Draft RUS, and that it only covers the next ten years. The complex mix of services operated on the SWML and secondary routes that link it to Portsmouth result in several issues that particularly affect passengers in the region. Specific issues include:

- connections between services at stations such as Eastleigh and Southampton
- lack of through services
- low frequencies that suppress demand
- poor service patterns
- slow journey times, for example Eastleigh to Bournemouth in the off-peak.

General issues for passengers are discussed in the next section; specific issues and the gaps and options identified in the Draft RUS follow that.

6.1 General Comments, the National Passenger Survey, Passenger Priorities:

Passenger Priorities for the South East show that passengers in the area place a greater importance on consistently fast journey times than those elsewhere in the country:

- Passengers rate a reduction in their journey time of more than five minutes in rank 7, compared to rank 11 nationally
- Passengers rate the train travelling at a consistently fast speed throughout the journey as rank 14, compared to rank 21 nationally.

Table 12 Autumn 2010 NPS: satisfaction with aspects of the timetable

	%	journey time	connections with train services	frequency	punctuality
Portsmouth ³⁰		82	79	78	95
Mainline ³¹		89	71	78	92

Table 12 shows that there is clearly scope for improvement to the timetables, but punctuality is rated highly. It would appear from the scores that passengers will expect any proposed changes to the timetables to leave performance unchanged.

Table 13 Autumn 2010 NPS satisfaction with train capacity

³⁰ Includes Portsmouth Harbour, Portsmouth & Southsea stations.

³¹ Includes Southampton Central, Southampton Airport Parkway and Eastleigh stations.

	%	room to sit/stand	ease of on/off
Portsmouth		78	92
Mainline		73	86

Passengers' satisfaction with the capacity available on trains is low compared to the ease of getting on and off trains, The Draft RUS notes in the last item in 10.3.3 that overcrowding was not identified as a gap, but we believe that passengers on some of the services, particularly some of Great Western's - on which stakeholders³² report serious overcrowding - and SWT's diesel services would disagree.

The market for rail travel to Southampton Airport is one that reflects the railway geography; passengers from the places served by the Eastleigh to Portsmouth and Southampton to Portsmouth lines have no through services and have lower frequencies than places on the SWML itself. Portsmouth is second as a generator of trips to Southampton Airport³³, originating 20% of its passengers, compared with the 38% from Southampton. However, the number of rail passengers from Portsmouth is only 14% of the number from Southampton, which suggests there is a largely untapped rail market for the airport.

We note that the demand forecasting includes an adjustment to reflect that standard railway modelling has under-estimated the recent growth that has occurred on many parts of the railway network. The 40% growth forecast in the Draft RUS over the next ten years does suggest that some services – particularly those operated by two, three or four cars – will become increasingly overcrowded. The final RUS should acknowledge that gap.

In the first paragraph of this section we commented on the complex nature of the services in this region. Here we comment on the complexity of interpreting the impact of the various options proposed, and, particularly, how the individual options relate to each other. The final RUS should make clear those inter-relationships.

We also suggest that a wide-ranging review of *all* the timetables operated on the routes through the region should be undertaken; the many options proposed in this section of the Draft RUS cannot be studied in isolation.

³² South Hampshire Rail Users' Group

³³ Southampton Airport Surface Access Strategy 2006 – 2011.

6.2 Gap S1 – Direct connectivity to Southampton Central and Southampton Airport Parkway:

Some of the options note that running existing services between Southampton and Portsmouth via Eastleigh would have an adverse impact on the journey time, but are not clear how great that impact would be. It would be helpful to have an indication of what the additional journey time might be.

6.2.1 Options S1.1 and S1.2 – Diversion of Southern services:

We note that this diversion is a franchise commitment of Southern. The journey time penalty involved in diverting Southern's services via Eastleigh appears to be nine minutes comparing a journey from Cosham to Southampton Central via Eastleigh during the off-peak with one via Netley. On balance, we welcome the fact that the option is recommended, but urge that option S1.2 is introduced as soon as possible to maximise the benefits for passengers and minimise the disbenefits of an unbalanced service. However, it is worth bearing in mind that this service bypasses most of the Portsmouth area stations which form a big catchment for Southampton Airport.

6.2.2 S1.3 – Diversion of the Great Western Portsmouth - Cardiff service:

One of the key attractions of this option is that it provides a direct service to Southampton Airport from Portsmouth itself, as Southern's Brighton – Southampton service does not run into the centre of Portsmouth, and would require passengers from Fratton and Portsmouth to change. As Portsmouth is a major traffic generator for the airport this option may be an attractive proposition for the airport operators and local passengers. We notice differences between the financial analyses of options S1.2 and S1.3, and seek clarification of the figures for operating costs and non-users benefits. Operating costs for option S1.2 are shown as £10.2 million, but £0 in option S1.3; non-users benefits are £4.8 million for S1.2, but a negative £12.9 for S1.3.

Both services would incur very similar additional journey time by running via Eastleigh, but it is described in option S1.3 as excessive. Given the 2½ hour journey time between Portsmouth to Bristol, and bearing in mind the other services mooted (particularly the revisions to the figure 6 Salisbury service) there may actually be scope to remove a stop or two out of the existing calling pattern and negate much of the time loss. Passenger Focus recommends a further look at whether this service could be timetabled.

6.2.3 S1.4 – New service Southampton – Portsmouth and Southsea via Botley, with redoubling the Portsmouth Single/New platform at Eastleigh:

We note the assessment that the option is operationally feasible but to be “more robust” would require the investment of £10.9 million for additional infrastructure. We believe that further work should be undertaken to see if it could be made sufficiently robust without new infrastructure.

6.2.4 S1.5 – New service Southampton – Portsmouth and Southsea via Netley:

The Draft RUS comments on the ‘high frequency’ bus service in the area served by this line, but fails to note that nowhere west of Fareham has direct buses to Portsmouth. The current fast Portsmouth, Cosham, Fareham, Southampton service (GW to Cardiff) takes 41 minutes between the two cities, suggesting that the 50 minute journey time the Draft RUS identifies as necessary could be achieved with two additional stops at the smaller stations. Overall, this option would provide a more frequent service between Portsmouth and Southampton and also provide a more frequent service for some of the small stations on the route.

Passenger Focus has campaigned hard for trains to be diverted around engineering work, so that passengers do not have to use rail replacement bus services. Therefore we support to the point in 10.8.2.21 regarding this line’s use as a diversionary route for Waterloo-Weymouth services.

6.2.5 S1.6 Divert the Great Western Cardiff to Portsmouth service via Chandler’s Ford:

It is not clear if the service would continue to run via Netley, or would be diverted via Botley as well, as in option S1.3. We note the brief assessment of this option, which does suggest that the conclusion not to recommend the option is correct. However, option S1.8, to redouble the line through Chandler’s Ford, which is required for this option, informs us that further work is being carried out and will be reported in the final RUS, which should explain what the additional capacity on the line will be used for.

6.2.6 S1.7 Extension of the Salisbury ‘Figure 6’ service back to Salisbury:

We note the benefits this option would provide by speeding up the journey between Salisbury and Eastleigh and Southampton Airport, and the potential for improving the timetable interval between Salisbury and Southampton. We await with interest the result of the further timetabling work.

Table 10.3 Infrastructure options and Table 10.4 Alternative transport systems

Passenger Focus believes that the aspiration of Transport for South Hampshire, to use the right of way of the line between St. Denys and Fareham for conversion for use by another type of transit system, has not been sufficiently developed in the Draft RUS to explain how the value of compensating benefits to existing rail passengers will repay the costs of the new infrastructure required to allow existing rail services to be diverted.

6.3 Gap S2 – Marchwood Line

We note the issues described in the Draft RUS that would make re-opening the line to passenger trains difficult. However, local stakeholders point out that there is considerable road congestion during peak times, with buses running late, despite additional timetabled journey time. We recommend that, as far as practical, nothing should be done that would prevent re-opening the line should that option become viable.

6.4 Gap S3 – Car park provision

Existing passenger research by Passenger Focus suggests that a lack of car parking space may actually suppress overall demand for rail. If passengers cannot park at their station then some will drive to the next station or drive all the way to their destination – the net effect being to increase car use. Nearly a quarter of passengers would also travel earlier in order to get a space³⁴, which would then further add to peak time crowding as people travel at busier period when they should not need to.

Passenger Focus therefore believes that the adequate provision of car parking should be given thorough consideration when examining ways of dealing with peak crowding and growth. Indeed, we have long maintained that the provision of car parking at railway stations should be seen as a separate issue in its own right and not part of more general discussions on car parking in town and city centres. Passenger Focus is also mindful of the need to ensure that parking spaces at stations are used by rail users and not by other drivers. This may be an issue if local authorities use parking measures to reduce car use in the region.

Passenger Focus examined the size of the impact that the lack of car parking has on rail passengers in their March 2007 report 'Getting to the Station'. This case study of stations in the East of England found that the lack of parking was suppressing demand for rail services by 19%. Additionally, for those passengers still prepared to use the rail network, it was resulting in a significant increase in the number and length of car journeys as people were being driven to and from the station, potentially doubling the number of car trips compared with somebody parking at the station. It is also notable that 38% of people indicated they would drive to a more distant station if they were unable to park at their local station.

³⁴ Getting to the Station, Passenger Focus March 2007

Passenger Focus is disappointed by the lack of any specific recommendations. The biggest capacity increase is at Southampton Airport Parkway which already has significant rail-heading. Given that increasing the number of parking spaces at alternative stations can spread overall demand for rail services, we suggest that there is a need for more analysis of that option before the final RUS is published.

Gap S4 – Improve journey times on the Portsmouth Direct and Alton lines

The journey time of the London to Portsmouth trains equates to an average speed of only 49 mph. In the Autumn 2010 NPS only 65% of passengers on the route in the peaks rate the journey time as satisfactory. We note the various opportunities to increase speeds on the route. Passengers will hope that the review will identify options that can be implemented quickly and provide a worthwhile improvement in journey times for passengers, rather than simply putting more slack into the operators timetables. Passengers on the Alton line will also expect to benefit from reduced journey times.

7.0 Summary table of Passenger Focus's responses to RUS options

Gap	Option	RUS conclusion	Passenger Focus opinion
A GWML	A1	recommended for further development, but as part of further interventions	agree
	A2	recommended for further development, but as part of further interventions	agree
	A3	recommended for further development, but as part of further interventions	agree
	A4	not viable	agree, but does long-term potential require that it should be developed?
	A5	not operationally viable in the peaks	disagree, it could be operationally viable
	A6	recommended for further development	agree
B ECML	B1	requires further investigation	agree
	B2	requires further investigation	agree
	B3	further development	agree
	B4	possibly valid on wider grounds	agree
	B5	cannot be recommended at present	agree
C Lea Valley	C1	if business case supports, likely to be recommended	should be implemented
	C2	work needed to see if a business case exists	agree
	C3	further investigation; not recommended at present	could be implemented as phases of C2
C4	further investigation; not recommended at present		
C Lea Valley	C5	further development, if business case	more details and a conclusion should be provided in the final RUS
	C6	potentially necessary	
	C7	develop further if business case is made; cannot prevent resolution of gap D	agree
	D	D1	requires additional

Gap	Option	RUS conclusion	Passenger Focus opinion
GEML		infrastructure	
	D2	does not close gap	utility of ERTMS must be determined
	D3	work needed to identify infrastructure required, and if there is a business case	final RUS must include details
E BML	E1	requires additional infrastructure	agree
	E2	does not close gap	utility of ERTMS must be determined
	E3	keep under review	must be fully scoped now for the future
	E4	not recommended	high costs and missed centres of demand noted
F SWML	F1	not recommended, but keep under review	agree
	F2	not recommended	agree
	F3	possibly required if no other options	agree
	F4	further work necessary	agree
G Windsor Lines	G1	recommend, if a business case exists?	implement
	G2	recommend, if a business case exists?	implement
	G3	keep under review	agree
	G4	consider on resignalling	provide details in the final RUS: include all longer-term schemes in a summary (see 11.2.2 in the Draft RUS)
H Elephant & Castle corridor	H1	option to lengthen cannot be adopted, but keep under review	seek alternative solution(s)
I Orbital routes	I1	develop further: short-term for 60 minute interval, longer term for 30 minutes.	must be implemented as soon as possible
	I2	implement when rolling stock is available, post Thameslink	crowding should be relieved within months, not years

8. Summary table of Passenger Focus's responses to RUS options for Solent and Hampshire

Gap	Option	RUS conclusion	Passenger Focus opinion
S1	S1.1	recommended subject to more timetabling work	support, but prefer S1.2
	S1.2	recommended subject to more timetabling work	support
	S1.3	not recommended	more analysis/clarification is required, particularly of financial aspects
	S1.4	not recommended	more work required to assess robustness
	S1.5	not recommended, but needs more timetabling work	we believe this could provide passengers with an improved services
	S1.6	not recommended	agree, but more detail required
	S1.7	not recommended, but needs more timetabling work	we await the results of the further work
	S1.8	more work required, will report in final RUS	noted, what use is expected to be made of the capacity?
S2	-	not recommended	retain ability to re-open if becomes viable
S3	-	no recommendation	the final RUS must include proposals
S4	-	awaiting results of review	passengers want improvements

Appendix A: List of Stakeholders

We arranged two meetings with rail user groups (RUGs) one in July 2009 and another on 24 January 2011 in London. Network Rail attended the meetings to make presentations. The groups who attended are listed below.

Railway and other user groups

Organisation
Alton Line Users Group
Association of Dunstable Area Passenger Trains
Barking-Gospel Oak Line User Group
Bedford Commuters Association
Bexhill Rail Action Group
Brighton Line Commuters
Cambridge Heath & London Fields Rail Users
Chelmsford Commuters & Rail Travellers (CART)
Clapham Transport Users Group
East Surrey Transport Committee
Enfield Commuter Club & Enfield Transport Users Group
Essex Rail Users Association & Manningtree Rail Users Association
Essex Rail Users Federation
Forest Hill Society
Marlow-Maidenhead Passenger's Association
North Kent Rail User Group
Norwood Rail Users Group
OnTrack
Rail Future
Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association
Southwark Rail Users' Group
Sutton Rail Users
Sydenham Society
Thurrock Rail Users' Group
Watford Rail Users Group
West London Line User Group
West Sussex Rail Users Association

Appendix B: Bibliography

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