

CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING NOTE FOR MEMBERS

Re: Board meeting 18.03.14, Item 9, transport access to London airports

1. Key data

Table: Mode of Access to the London Airports

	Heathrow	Gatwick	London City	Luton	Stansted
Bus	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Coach	9%	6%	0%	15%	21%
Courtesy Bus	2%	3%	0%	0%	1%
DLR	-	-	52%	-	-
Hire Car	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%
Private Car Parked	13%	23%	3%	22%	20%
Car Dropped Off	18%	19%	10%	26%	20%
Rail	10%	34%	-	17%	25%
Taxi	26%	13%	34%	16%	9%
Tube	16%	-	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Terminating pax (000s)	42,138	28,390	2,724	8,440	17,298

Source: CAA Survey Data 2010

2. Current access to London's airports

The modal share reflects the geography of the airports and their historic transport links as well as the types of airline that serve each airport.

Heathrow

Served by mainly 'flag carrier' long haul airlines, using the airport as a hub. Close proximity of M25 and M4 motorways accounts for significant proportion of traffic by taxi and private cars. Low proportion of rail journeys reflects the limited connectivity to the National Rail network (only to Paddington). Some passengers using rail for the longest part of their journey to the airport will be counted under local buses and coaches as this is the last part of their journey (from Feltham, Woking, Reading, Watford Junction). Heathrow has a significant local bus network (mainly TfL) that provides comprehensive connectivity to the large population base of West London, Surrey, Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire. This also means that the airport acts as an interchange for non-air journeys between these areas and other parts of the country. Heathrow is within the Oyster area, and served by the Piccadilly line. However, the faster rail services run by Heathrow Express and Heathrow Connect do not accept Oyster on journeys to and from the airport. According to the Heathrow Airport Operators Association (of Airlines) the withdrawal of cash from TfL buses will cause significant issues at Heathrow, because the Oyster outlets are not 24 hours whereas the buses mostly operate throughout the day and night. They think that this will cause difficulties for air travellers (particularly those visiting friends and relatives) from countries without compatible contactless cards and limited English. This will

exacerbated by the fact that buses from outside London from Heathrow will still accept cash,

Gatwick

Mixture of 'flag carrier', 'low cost' and 'package' airlines. Extensive rail connections accounts for very large proportion of journeys by rail. Gatwick has a smaller local bus network (including a busway) that connects it to smaller population base of Crawley, Horley and East Grinstead. Close proximity to M23 gives good access by car from surrounding area, but less so to central London. The airport has a local market from the Sussex Coast and south London. The airport is not currently within the Oyster area, but there is significant pressure to extend Oyster to rail services linking the airport to the London area and an expectation that this will be implemented this year. There is significant public misunderstanding about this – resulting in significantly higher numbers of Penalty Fares being issued compared to other airports to passengers who believe mistakenly that Oyster is valid to Gatwick. Southern and Metrobus (both in Go-ahead group) have their own smartcard scheme in operation for passengers travelling to Gatwick.

London City

Specialises in smaller short haul flights focused on the business market. Proximity to Canary Wharf and the City of London is major selling point for the airport and accounts for the high proportion of travel by DLR and taxis. Car travel is limited by the restricted amount of car parking and drop off space and there are no coach connections. Bus network is largely a function of airport employees' needs, although hours of operation do not meet the needs of all employees, many of whom drive to work. Oyster is accepted on all public transport modes.

Luton

This is mainly used by 'low cost' and 'tour package' airlines, but also private jets.. This is reflected in the proportion of coach passengers (with competition on the London route). Rail also has a significant market share, reflecting the Thameslink and East Midlands Trains that call at the Parkway station. The Parkway station is some way from the airport and passengers need to use a transfer service to reach the airport terminal. Since 2010 the Luton – Dunstable busway has opened and this extends to the airport and so should increase the proportion of people arriving by local bus. The high proportion of car usage reflects the proximity of the M1. The airport has a local market from the south and east midlands. Oyster does not extend to Luton and there are no plans to extend it.

Stansted

This is mainly used by 'low cost' and 'tour package' airlines. The airport is significantly further away from central London than other London airports, with consequential longer journey times by surface transport. This is reflected in the proportion of coach passengers, and much smaller market share for taxis. The rail market is constrained by the limited capacity and frequency of existing rail links. The M11 and A120 roads provide high speed road connectivity to the surrounding area, north London and the M25. The airport has a local market from Cambridge and East Anglia. Oyster does not extend to Stansted and there are no plans to extend it.

There is a local bus network – but the extent of this reflects the smaller local population to the airport.

Southend

Southend Airport whilst not in the London Rail area, Southend Airport has been expanded and rebranded as a ‘London’ airport. This has included the provision of a new rail station on the Liverpool Street – Southend Victoria route. The Airport is served by a limited number of ‘low cost’ airlines. Oyster does not extend to Southend and there are no plans to extend it.

3. Connectivity between airports

Traditionally public transport between airports has been provided by National Express coach, except between Gatwick and Luton where Thameslink trains provide a direct link. Gatwick Airport tell us that usage of the coach link to Heathrow has declined in recent years. This reflects changes by airlines to concentrate at particular London airports and not require international passengers to transfer between airports.

4. Improvement schemes currently under construction

Heathrow

Crossrail will provide a new direct service from Heathrow to central London and beyond to Canary Wharf, Stratford, Shenfield and Abbey Wood. This will substantially increase the public transport accessibility of the airport with reduced journey times for the places directly on the route and the interchange opportunities with other services that will be created at the eight major stations between Paddington and Stratford, and at outer locations such as Ealing Broadway, Romford and Abbey Wood. The interchange at Farringdon will reduce journey times to places on the Thameslink route including Gatwick and Luton airports.

Gatwick

A new platform has been built at the airport station that will give a greater capacity to the Brighton Main Line and a dedicated platform for Gatwick Express trains to Victoria. The Thameslink programme will significantly add to the train service provision with greater frequency of services to London Bridge, Blackfriars, Farringdon and St.Pancras, and new links to the Great Northern route to Peterborough and Cambridge.

London City

Since 2010 the DLR has expanded with the opening of the Canning Town-Stratford International link. This will have improved marginally City Airport’s public transport accessibility. Crossrail’s Abbey Wood branch will pass underneath City Airport but there is no station being constructed at this point. The nearest station will be at Custom House, from where onward travel to the airport by DLR would involve another change at Canning Town (or else a shuttle bus could be provided?).

Luton

The Thameslink programme will significantly add to the train service provision with greater frequency of services to St.Pancras, Farringdon, Blackfriars, London Bridge and Gatwick Airport. The construction of Crossrail with its interchange at Farringdon will increase the connectivity and reduce journey times from West and East London to Luton Airport. The electrification of the Midland Main Line will create additional opportunities for new and faster rail services to St.Pancras and the East Midlands.

A new A5-M1 link road is proposed for north of Dunstable that would improve local access to the airport.

Stansted

The construction of Crossrail with its interchanges at Liverpool Street and Stratford will increase the connectivity of Stansted Airport to West and East London. The rebuilding of Tottenham Hale station will improve the interchange with the Victoria Line for the West End.

Southend

There are currently no current schemes under construction that would enhance access to Southend Airport – which is very new, although Crossrail will be easy to get to by changing trains at Shenfield.

5. Projected Schemes

Heathrow

WRATH (Western Rail Access to Heathrow) is a proposal to link the Great Western Main Line to Heathrow Terminal 5 (Heathrow Express / Crossrail station) This would enable services from the Thames Valley to Paddington to divert via the airport or to provide separate services from Reading that would terminate at the airport.

Potentially this line would use the space that was reserved at Terminal 5 for the proposed Airtrack route from Staines. This was shelved when the proposed runway at Heathrow was rejected in 2010. This route would have provided a link to Staines, Richmond, Clapham Junction, London Waterloo, Woking, Guildford, Bracknell and Reading. The proposal was opposed by local politicians concerned that the additional trains would result in very long closures of level crossings in the Richmond and Egham areas. Although Network Rail are planning to close a large number of level crossings, in practice there are likely to be those in rural areas. Level crossings around Richmond and Egham are in very congested areas and would be very difficult to eliminate. Wandsworth Council has subsequently proposed reviving the scheme as 'Airtrack Lite' by extending or diverting existing services.

A further proposal is for a spur off HS2 following the M25 to Heathrow Terminal 5 to provide the ability for HS2 trains to serve the airport. This is currently envisaged as a later stage of the HS2 project.

Gatwick

A Network Rail 'route strategy' is currently being developed that will look at options for further increasing capacity on the Brighton Main Line. This might include

additional platforms and tracks at East Croydon, and flyovers at junctions south of Norwood Junction and Wivelsfield. The North Downs rail route to Reading could be electrified, bringing with it increased capacity, shorter journey times and increased connectivity between the Thames Valley, Guildford and Gatwick Airport.

The airport has a surface access strategy that includes provision of additional coach links to south and east London.

London City

The airport would benefit from improvements to the Lea Valley rail route north of Stratford towards Stansted Airport.

The projected Silvertown road tunnel would provide improved road access to the airport from South London avoiding the current bottleneck of the Blackwell Tunnel.

Luton

There are no immediate projected schemes for this airport.

Stansted

Network Rail, TfL and local authorities along the route have proposed to increase capacity on the main rail route to and from London by adding extra tracks between south of Tottenham Hale to Broxbourne, and a second rail tunnel into the airport complex. This would reduce the journey time between Stansted and Liverpool Street, and increase overall capacity, allowing more local trains to run on the Lea Valley route from Stratford and also on to a possible Crossrail 2 route to South West London.

A long term aspiration has been to provide a rail link between Stansted and Braintree to connect with the branch from there towards Chelmsford and Colchester.

Southend

There are no immediate projected schemes for this airport.

6. Are there any other options for increasing access to airports?

The interchange at Farringdon between Thameslink and Crossrail shows how the accessibility of all airports can be improved dramatically with a good single interchange.

The Airtrack scheme was supported by London TravelWatch because it substantially connected Heathrow Airport to existing interchanges such as Clapham Junction and Waterloo because of the good onward rail connections to South London, East Surrey, Sussex and Kent; to Staines, Woking and Guildford for local connections within Surrey, onward to Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset and Devon; to Bracknell, Wokingham and Reading for local services within Berkshire and onward to Bristol, Bath, South Wales, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and the West Midlands.

Similarly, the provision of a station on the Chiltern route at West Hampstead would dramatically improve the connectivity of Gatwick and Luton airports to North West

London, Buckinghamshire and north east Oxfordshire. London TravelWatch has previously also argued for there to be a connection from the Chiltern rail route to any HS2 spur to Heathrow Airport to allow direct local trains from the Chiltern route to Heathrow.

In south London the extension of Tramlink (with its connectivity to Gatwick and Luton airports via East Croydon) to Crystal Palace would reduce journey times from Bromley to Gatwick, and from inner South London to Gatwick because trains displaced by Tramlink would be diverted to Norwood Junction which has direct services to Gatwick.

For all airports road access is relatively good in their immediate neighbourhoods. However, within London the connectivity deteriorates at the point where the user leaves the main trunk or motorway network. Improvement of the South Circular Road would be an obvious priority for improving access to Heathrow (Westward), Gatwick (South) and Stansted (via the Blackwall Tunnel).

7. London TravelWatch casework information

Penalty fares – year to July 2013

Gatwick Airport – penalty fares issued 10,892 of which 5,885 were for journeys made on Oyster.

Luton Airport –penalty fares issued 3,775 of which 225 were for journeys made on Oyster

Stansted Airport – penalty fares issued 21 of which 3 were for journeys made on Oyster.

London TravelWatch airport related casework – year to February 2014

The information is from all case types (appeal, direct, initial) received between 1 March 2013 and 28 February 2014 and the figures are approximate. First Capital Connect serve both Luton and Gatwick and it is difficult with some cases to see which airport the passenger is journeying to - some figures therefore are best guess.

Stansted

TOC: Greater Anglia

Consequential loss is a common complaint from passengers on the Stansted express. Passengers believe that if they miss their flight due to delays on the train service, then the operator will refund the flight. This is particularly unfair when the passenger are unable to disembark as the train is not at a station but at a standstill due to a fault. **Cases received: 23**

Bus replacement transfers including the time the coach takes, not being informed the trains weren't running and too many people for the coach to carry. **Cases received: 4**

Tickets issues including being unable to print at station and cost of tickets. **Cases received: 8**

Luton

TOC: First Capital Connect

Ticket issues including unable to collect and finding the right ticket **Cases received: 4**

Rude staff **Case received: 2**

Helpful staff **Cases received: 1**

Gatwick

TOC: First Capital Connect

Delays to service **Cases received: 5**

Consequential loss **Cases received: 5**

Tickets type and collection options **Cases received: 6**

Gatwick

TOC: Southern

Tickets type, TVMS and collection options **Cases received: 24**

Delays – **Cases received: 24** (8 of these over the Christmas period when the line was closed)

Consequential loss **Cases received: 10**

Staff complaints **Cases received: 4**

Heathrow

London Underground – too crowded, last train went from different platform and staff unhelpful **Cases received: 3**

Heathrow Express – Delays, ticket policy ie not being able to buy discounted ticket on board and cost **Cases received: 4**