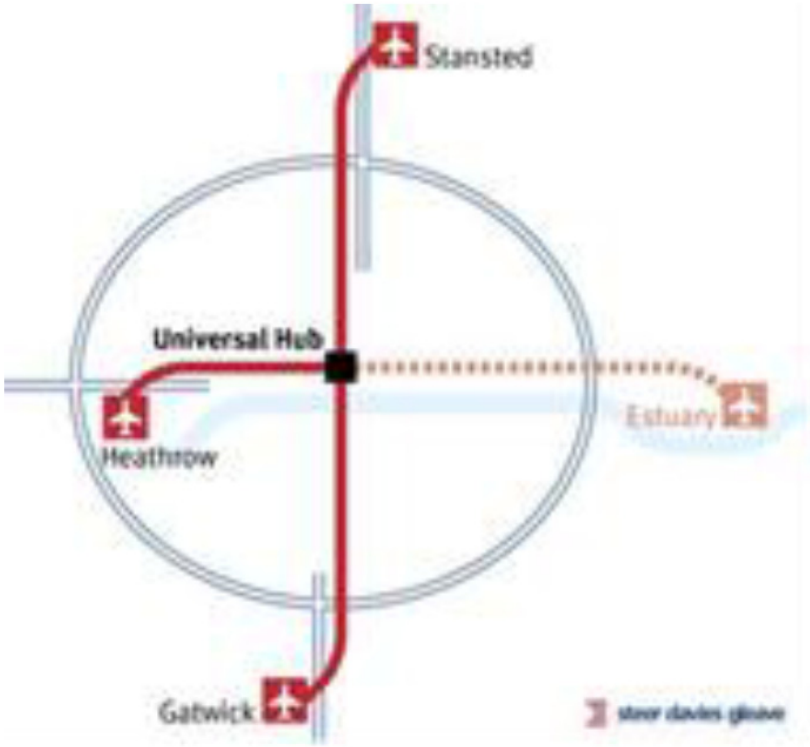
PROPOSAL TITLE:	**Universal Hub for London**	**Short Term**	☐
SUBMITTED BY:	**Private Individual**	**Medium/Long Term**	☒

PROPOSAL

Construction of a single universal hub at Farringdon with a station beneath Smithfield Market used by all air travellers irrespective of airport or airline. The Universal Hub would serve London's main airports via direct, non-stop underground rail links.



INITIAL ASSESSMENT COMMENT

Although a novel proposal, it is not clear that the scheme is required in order to make maximum use of the existing system capacity. Construction costs and risks would be high without adding capacity to the system.

It is assumed that the Universal Hub would be used principally by those central London O/D passengers, for whom it would be easier to access the Hub than the individual airport directly, and passengers transferring between airports. It is assumed that passengers transferring within an airport (for example Heathrow) would continue to do so without the additional journey to/from the Universal Hub.

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OVERVIEW

Proposal	Construction of a single universal hub at Farringdon with a station beneath Smithfield Market used by all air travellers irrespective of airport or airline. The Universal Hub would serve London's main airports via direct, non-stop underground rail links.	
Approach	It is assumed that the proposal is for government to lead the development of the required infrastructure.	**Assumed Capital Cost** £100 bn+
Potential Benefits	▪ **Facilitates better use to be made of existing capacity.**	**Capacity (mppa)** 0 **Capacity (ATM)** 0
Key Issues & Risks		
Strategic Fit	▪ Does not add capacity to the existing airport system. ▪ Although the proposal could in theory help enable best use of existing capacity by enabling better surface access, the proposal does itself not add capacity to the existing airport system	
Economy	▪ Does not add capacity into the London system, so whilst it could help make maximum use of available capacity it does not clearly increase connectivity or add to economic activity. ▪ Additional passenger and baggage processing cost to airlines, plus additional immigration and custom requirements likely to be passed through into ticket prices potentially reducing the attractiveness to passengers.	
Surface Transport	▪ Uncertain whether the proposed scheme could achieve the travel times claimed.	
Environment	▪ Large construction carbon footprint.	
Cost	▪ No cost estimate provided, but including the orbital route, plus indicated interchanges at each airport, the cost is likely to exceed £100 bn.	
Operations	▪ Uncertain that the claimed operational benefits are demanded by airlines or, if the capacity were available, that it would be used to any great extent.	
Delivery	▪ Range of support measures likely to be needed for private financing, including government support / commitment and supportive regulatory framework and planning environment and wider package of measures to reduce the cost of finance. ▪ High and significant construction risk.	