

PROPOSAL TITLE:	London Air Rail Rapid Transit System (LARTS)	Short Term	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUBMITTED BY:	Interlinking Transit Solutions	Medium/Long Term	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

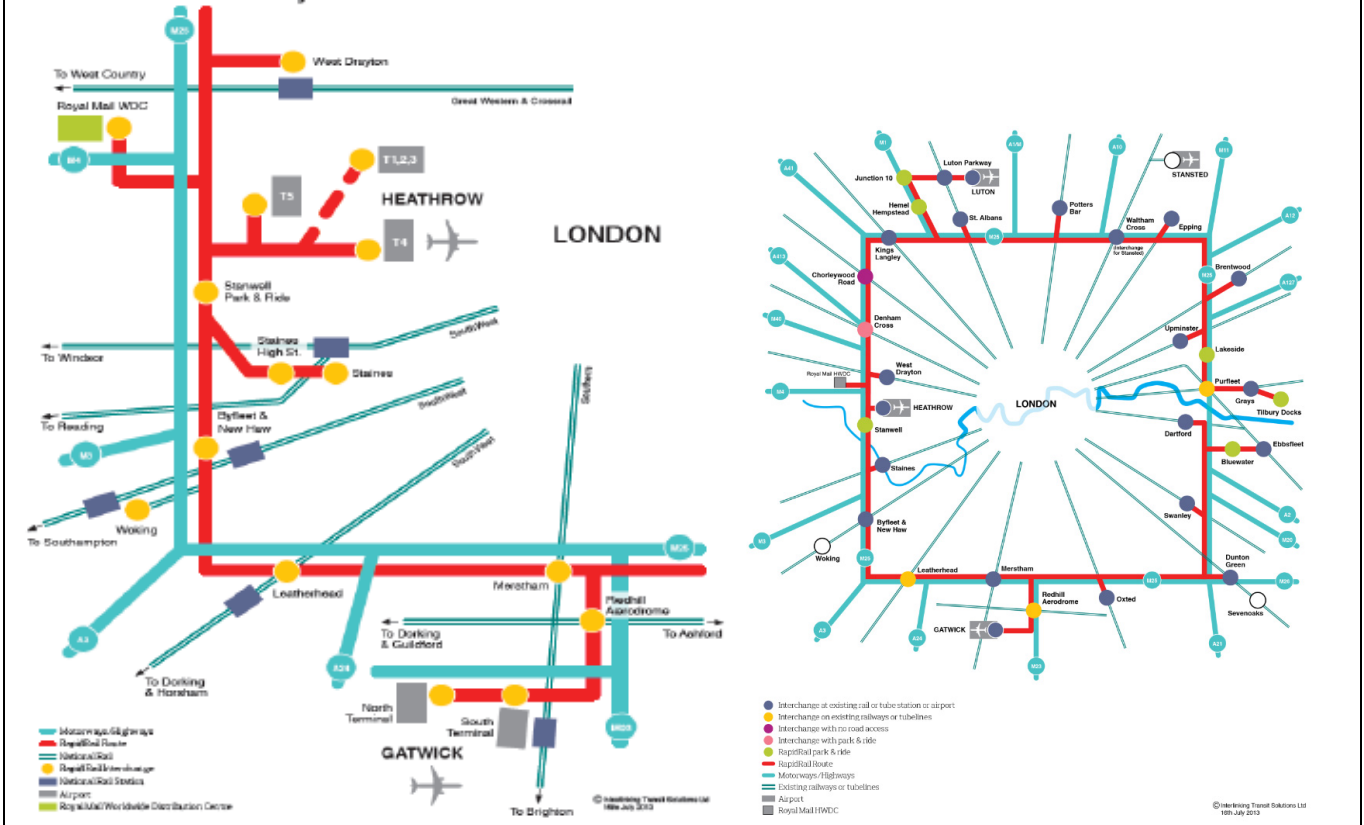
PROPOSAL

Construct a light rapid transit system alongside the M25, M23 and M1 connecting the existing airports and railway lines.

The light rail ‘RapidRail’ system will mix express services with stopping services and with a maximum speed of 125kph. RapidRail stations will be located close to airport terminals and will integrate with existing stations using elevated platforms and guideways.

Airport passengers will be able to connect with major railway lines radiating from London without having to travel into the centre.

The infrastructure facilitates a ‘constellation of airports’ concept, providing a surface transport link between capacities at airports in the London system.



INITIAL ASSESSMENT COMMENT

A novel surface transport concept with the potential to improve access to existing airports from many regional destinations currently connected only via central London.

Delivered as described, the system could improve journey times and reliability of travel to airports. However it is not clear that the scheme is required in order to make maximum use of the existing system capacity. Whilst the system would improve surface access to airports and could, in theory, enable hubbing passengers to move between airports, such movements would be landside and likely to incur significant time penalty.

Construction costs and risks would be high without adding capacity to the system.

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OVERVIEW

Proposal	<u>To construct a light rail system along the route of the M25, to connect London’s radial railway lines and airports to each other.</u>		
Approach	<u>Government support is required to bring together the local authorities, Highways Agency, National Rail, CAA and DfT. The project would operate under one corporate umbrella.</u>		Assumed Capital Cost £10 bn
	Unstated but it is assumed that the scheme would be wholly government led.		
Potential Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>‘Brown’ land corridors for rail route requiring no demolition of housing.</u>▪ <u>Relieves congestion and air pollution on the M25 and other roads.</u>▪ <u>Encourages/facilitates a modal shift from private to public transport.</u>▪ <u>Typically higher reliability form of transport than road or conventional rail.</u>▪ May offer broader economic benefit improving regional surface access		Capacity (mppa) 0 Capacity (ATM) 0
Key Issues & Risks			
Strategic Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dispersed/constellation hub concept is facilitated by improved surface access, but does not itself add capacity to the existing airport system. Therefore, whilst it may help make best possible use of existing capacity it does not appear aligned with the Commission’s remit.		
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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.		
Surface Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Uncertain whether proposed scheme could operate as suggested.▪ It is uncertain that the proposed route would be the most efficient regional transport scheme given possible limited alternative uses.▪ Large, local road and rail upgrades required to serve station locations.		
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Impacts a number of designated sites.▪ Large construction carbon footprint.		
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quoted cost above based upon provided estimate of £31m/km. This would appear to underestimate total cost including all adaptations to existing rail lines, airports and new stations, plus incremental road upgrades.		
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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.▪ Passenger movements between airports would appear to be landside and therefore it is not clear how this would facilitate efficient hubbing operations.▪ Unclear that the above ground proposed solution could run to the existing CTA at Heathrow without presenting a fundamental obstruction to airport operations.		
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Uncertain whether the proposed scheme could operate as suggested: the planning and engineering difficulties of delivering the system above ground in a congested urban area appears significant and underestimated in the submission		