

LiRa-2 newsletter

21 May 2004 - Issue 3

Introduction

This is the third LiRa-2 newsletter. You receive this newsletter with information about the LiRa-2 projects and LiRa-2 partners on a regular base.

If you have any questions or remarks about this newsletter you can send an e-mail to:

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UK

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Report of the UK's National Audit Office: Improving public transport in England through light rail

On 19th April, the UK's National Audit Office, which is independent of Government and scrutinises public spending on behalf of Parliament, published a report on the performance of Light Rail systems in England.



The report - Improving public transport in England through light rail - considered the 7 light rail systems currently operating in England and concluded that while light rail has improved the quality and choice of public transport, post-implementation evaluation has been incomplete and the potential benefits of light rail have not been fully exploited. In particular:

1. Passenger numbers, and therefore passenger benefits, have been lower than expected for three out of five systems the National Audit Office

Limburg

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Cross-border Avantis business park gets lighth-rail connection

As part of the PAT Province of Limburg, inquiries were sent out to



various contractors for a LiRa 2 study - railway connection Avantis Business Park. The study includes the routing design of a new railway to and from Avantis with tie-ins to the existing railways Vetschau (Germany) - Simpelveld and Simpelveld - Kerkrade. The Avantis Business Park is located on the border between Germany and the Netherlands and the development of the Business Park is very important for the labour employment in the city areas of Aachen and Heerlen. By introducing the new railway connection through the Avantis business parc, there will be a second railway connection between Aachen and Heerlen over Kerkrade.

The first railway connection between Aachen and Heerlen over Herzogenrath has a limited capacity with a frequency of one train (light rail) per hour in each direction. The

examined. The shortfalls were attributed to overoptimistic forecasting, changes to the patronage base, early operational problems, competition from buses and the physical limitations of some of the routes selected.

2. English light rail systems are not fully integrated with other forms of public transport and that "Passengers consider the level of integration to be the least satisfactory aspect of light rail."

3. Light rail has had a limited impact on congestion. While there has been a shift from cars to light rail, some of the vacated road space has been taken up by other car trips.

4. It is unclear what impact light rail has had on regeneration and social exclusion. While noting the methodological difficulties of isolating such impacts, the report points out that for regeneration, quantitative information has only been collected for the Sheffield system and that the impact on social inclusion has not been considered in any post-implementation evaluation.

The National Audit Office compared English light rail systems with French systems in Lyon and Grenoble and German systems in Karlsruhe and Freiburg. They concluded that French and German light rail systems have several design features which make them better able to deliver benefits to passengers and local communities than their English counterparts:

- French and German systems are usually segregated from, and given priority over, other traffic at junctions.
- They are fully integrated with other public transport by, for instance, feeder bus services,

order for the LiRa 2 study - railway connection Avantis Business Park has been awarded to DHVRuimte en Mobiliteit in Maastricht, who was also involved in the past with the cross border road design to and from the Avantis Business Park.

(details about the Avantis Business Park can be found on the LiRa-2 internet site)

Birmingham [Back to top](#) **Midland Metro Line 1** **had a hole in its service**

An 8-minute frequency is continuing to operate between 07.00 and 19.00. Altram's operator, Travel Midland Metro regularly achieves 98-99% performance reliability against this headway. Enhancements to Line 1 are under consideration, in the context of negotiations about the longer term operation of an enlarged network. A hole that opened up in the Metro formation to the north of the Jewellery Quarter stop was excavated and backfilled during a temporary suspension of services from 16:00 on 13 April to the start of service on 16 April. The hole had opened up as a result of uneven settlement of backfill to the portal frame bridge structure carrying the Metro line over the adjacent Birmingham Middle Ring Road at Icknield Street. On the previous Thursday morning 8 April there was unfortunately a derailment at Snow Hill station when the leading bogie of the first tram left the track at slow speed whilst crossing the points at the entrance to the platform. Services had resumed by lunchtime.

[Information on Midland Metro extensions](#)

MIDLAND METRO PHASE 1 EXTENSIONS

Birmingham Tramway

co-ordinated timetables and through ticketing.

- In France, street improvement is an integral part of light rail schemes, providing a significant facelift along the route to match the modern vehicles being introduced.

French and German light rail systems have significantly higher patronage than comparable systems in England. The report identifies several reasons for this:

- Subsidised fares.
- A larger patronage base - mainly due to higher population densities.
- More stations and vehicles.
- Better integration with other public transport (see above).
- Better connections to where people want to go: hospitals, universities, commercial and shopping centres, etc. This has not always been the case in England where some light rail routes have followed old railway lines remote from 'traffic generators'.

The report identifies five barriers to the development of light rail:

- Cost. The report notes that these are rising and suggests that this might in part be due to the private sector bearing all the revenue risk. Attempts to cut costs, for instance by dropping park and ride proposals or closed circuit television monitoring, could have had an adverse impact on patronage and revenue.
- Poor financial performance of some existing systems.
- Local authorities' concern about procuring funds to promote a system and to help pay for its construction.
- The lengthy planning and approval process.

The TWA Order application was submitted in March 2003 and a public inquiry was held at the Birmingham Hippodrome Conference Suite between 2nd December 2003 and 13 January 2004. The Inspector undertook to supply his report to the Planning Inspectorate by Easter 2004, and negotiations between Birmingham City Council, Travel West Midlands and Centro on re-arrangement of the layout and operation of the Birmingham Bus Mall continue.

Wednesbury to Brierley Hill

The TWA Order application was submitted in April 2003 and a public inquiry was held at the Copthorne Hotel in Merry Hill, between 23rd March and 16 April 2004. The Inspector hopes to supply his report to the Planning Inspectorate by the end of May 2004.

Implementation

An implementation team has been formed to develop the two phase 1 extensions as a single project to procurement, so that tenders can be invited as soon as positive decisions on the Transport & Works Act Orders are received from the Secretary of State. The current procurement strategy envisages the separation of the design, build and maintain functions from the operational concession. Both routes have a target opening date of 2008.

MIDLAND METRO PHASE 2 EXTENSIONS

Economic evaluation work, engineering design and environmental impact assessment is progressing on the 60km Phase 2 network of routes to develop the alignments through Outline

- Lack of in-house expertise in some local authorities.

The report notes that there are fewer barriers to light rail in France and Germany:

- In England promoters have to pay 92.5% of the cost of diverting utilities; in Germany, the proportion is lower and in France promoters pay nothing.
- In France, promoters can draw on local transport taxes to help pay for light rail.
- In Germany, track sharing with heavy rail is more common.

The report makes a number of recommendations including:

- Comprehensive post-implementation evaluation of light schemes with the results posted on the internet.
- Better integration of light rail with other forms of transport. Measures could include better provision park and ride sites and considering regulation of buses to stop them competing with light rail.
- Better priority for light rail at road junctions.
- Identification of the most cost effective way of procuring light rail systems.
- Greater standardisation in system design, vehicles and construction methods.
- Development of safety standards specific and appropriate to light rail.
- Consideration by Central Government of whether it is appropriate that promoters of light rail should pay 92.5% of the cost of diverting utilities.
- At an early stage in the planning process, those considering light rail should

Business Case to preparation for Transport & Works Act Orders.

Public consultation on the contents of the Outline Business Case took place during November and December 2003 and in Birmingham was extended to the end of February 2004. West Midlands Chief Executives and District Leaders have agreed on a prioritisation of the routes into Phase 2a and Phase 2b, in order to tailor the Metro expansion plans to match the available funds and this prioritisation was accepted by the WMPTA at its meeting on 22 March 2004. The Varsity North, Quinton, Eastside (subject to positive business case) and 4Ws (Wolverhampton to Walsall) routes are to be developed in Phase 2a, with the Airport and 2Ws (Walsall to Wednesbury) routes following as Phase 2b, and the Bartley Green branch being abandoned. It is hoped that with relevant district council support the first IOBC will be submitted in late 2004. Subject to satisfactory progress through the Transport & Works Act Order making process the Phase 2a routes will open from 2012 onwards and the Phase 2b routes from 2016. DfT funding is already earmarked for the government contribution towards the funding package for the Phase 2a routes as part of the initial settlement in respect of the West Midlands Area Multi-Modal Study.

WOLVERHAMPTON INTERCHANGE LiRa-2 FUNDED WORK

The Wolverhampton Interchange Project is situated on the prioritised 4Ws route and is being developed in advance of Centro's light rail project by Wolverhampton City Council. Atkins are the consultants who have been appointed to carry out the

assess whether conversion or track sharing, or substitution of light for heavy rail, are viable alternatives.

- Developing sources of funds for light rail other than the tax payer, including congestion charging.
- A more strategic approach at national level to the development of light rail.

The full report can be obtained from:

www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/03-04/0304518.pdf

Haarlem, Schiphol Zuidtangent still better than expected [Back to top](#)

The Zuidtangent High Quality Bus Service between Haarlem, Schiphol Airport and Amsterdam south-east is performing above expectations.



Usually, it takes two years or more before the number of passengers reaches the predicted level. In the Zuidtangent case, one year after opening in 2002 the ridership on some parts of the line was higher than the predictions for 2005. In 2003 the number of passengers rose again, although somewhat less than in 2002.

The larger part of the line has its own right of way. In the inner city of Haarlem the final route is still under consideration.

Manchester Greater Manchester launches Real Time Passenger Information on Quality Bus Corridors [Back to top](#)

Real Time Passenger Information

LiRa-2-funded work, and they are making good progress with their commission, as programmed.

MIDLAND METRO PHASE 3 EXTENSIONS

A number of other routes are in prospect over a longer-term horizon (to open in 2016 or later). However, preliminary development and prioritisation work is commencing on these routes. In the first instance a "track sharing" study has commenced in partnership with Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, the West Midlands Regional Assembly, Network Rail and the SRA, to evaluate the possibility of light rail conversion of the Coventry to Nuneaton rail service following the severance of the Coventry to Nottingham route by West Coast Main Line station remodelling work at Nuneaton.

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Brussels Free Public Transport for Flemish students in the Brussels Capital Region [Back to top](#)

Since June 2003, Flemish students can ask a payback of their Public Transport Season Ticket, valid within the Brussels Capital Region. This has been such a success that the Flemish Government has given an extra subsidy to the "Quartier Lantin" - an organisation that assembles all Dutch universities and colleges of the Region - in order to ensure that all 8.077 Flemish students that have asked a payback, will profit from free public transport in the Brussels Capital Region.

And it is clear that this initiative has made the Flemish student more mobile, in the literal and figurative

(RTPI) has been implemented at eight key stops on Manchester's 112 route, which runs between Manchester and Middleton to the north of the city. The RTPI system is based on satellite tracking technology and will shortly be activated on five further routes.

City Region of Haaglanden [Back to top](#)
2200 tons heavy bridge on 384 wheels across A12 motorway

In the night between Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 march the



contractor-combination Colijn-De Koning has moved a 2200 tons bridge across the A12 motorway near The Hague. The bridge is the last part of the Nootdorpboog rail connection, a €60m track between the Leidschendam [werkplaats] of the railways and the Gouda - The Hague main line.

The 1500 m connection is necessary to give way to the RandstadRail light rail system. It is not possible to combine the heavy rail trains with the high frequency of the light rail system. Moving the rolling stock maintenance facility to another site would have been much more expensive than the construction of the connection.

The bridge was constructed on a yard adjacent to the motorway and jacked up onto eight platforms with combined 384 wheels. Traffic on the motorway was stopped for 15 minutes and later for another 30 minutes.

The bridge is 125 m long and 47 m high. In the months to come rails, overhead wiring and signalling will

sense of the word. A closer look at the ticket numbers makes clear that 3 out of 4 students have never asked for a season ticket before.

Moreover, being asked, students say that they use the ticket to get to know better the different districts of the Brussels Capital Region, to visit theatres and to participate in all sorts of extra curriculum activities. And this was exactly the aim of the Flemish government.

In the mean time, the negotiations for a free Public Transport Season Ticket for next year have already started with the Brussels Public Transport Company, making sure this time that students know that they not only can ask for a payback, but are also entitled to have a reduction of ticket prize, given to them by the Brussels Public Transport Company directly.

(Christel Straetemans, Directie Vervoerbeleid, 28 april 2004)

Manchester [Back to top](#)
Get connected with public transport

Published on Thursday, 01 April 2004

Names like Hazel Grove and Miles Platting may seem familiar enough, but they are about to be given a whole new image, thanks to Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE).

A new promotional campaign - 'Connecting people with places' - features a series of illustrated characters with names based on Greater Manchester places meeting up in a variety of social situations. The aim of the campaign is to encourage people to consider using public transport for some of the journeys they need to make.

A pocket guide booklet has also been produced, which is packed full

be built. The connection is to be ready for traffic by the end of 2005.

City Region of Haaglanden Rolling-stock for RandstadRail The Hague - Zoetermeer branch chosen

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HTM and City Region of Haaglanden have chosen the french



manufacturer Alstom to supply 50 light-rail vehicles to be used on the Zoetermeer line.

The European tender started in 2003. The total cost of the order is around 150 million Euros. The decision was primarily based on the financial aspects, the time of delivery and the predicted maintenance cost. The Alstom offer was the best regarding level entry, the seats in the vehicle and the terms of the contract with HTM. The main characteristics of the the vehicles:

- weight 58 tons
- length 38 meters
- width 2.65 meters
- seating capacity 90
- standing capacity 130
- bidirectional construction
- 5 doors on each side
- maximum speed 80 kmh
- safe wheelchair space
- dynamic traveller information
- climate control

RandstadRail is the new light-rail connection between The Hague, Zoetermeer and Rotterdam. In the next two years the existing heavy-rail Zoetermeer line and Hofplein line will be converted into a light-rail system independent of the NS. In he Hague the lines will be connected to the tramway system, in Rotterdam to the metro system.

of useful information about how to use public transport in Greater Manchester, including how to get information while out and about, information on ticketing options and details of specialist transport services.

Posters are being put up on buses and at bus stops, bus stations and rail stations. The illustrations are also available as a series of postcards, which have been distributed to local bars, clubs, restaurants and shops.

The booklet is also available from GMPT's network of Travelshops, which are situated at most major bus stations throughout the county, by calling the publication order line on 0161-242 6040, or logging on to the campaign website at www.peoplewithplaces.com

City Region of Haaglanden Regional Travel Information System: City Region, Province and Dutch Government give companies a lift

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The City Region of Haaglanden, the province of Zuid-Holland and the Dutch Ministry of Transportation and Waterworks have started a public tender for the project "ICT in Accessibility". The result must be the availability of region-wide real-time travel information services. The project is unique, as it does not precisely define the service ordered, but instead asks for market knowledge and creativity to develop mobility information services. The project is a part of the SWINGH-operation. The acronym stands for Working together in Greater Haaglanden. The Leiden region also participates.

In the past several local traveller information systems have been

In December 2001 the Dutch government vowed to provide 1 billion Euros, asking the regional authorities make the other 400 million Euros available. The The Hague - Zoetermeer branch of RandstadRail is set to start service in the summer of 2006.

developed, such as

- dynamic route information on the road from the Flower Auction at Naaldwijk to the Motorway
- route information panels in The Hague
- public transport information panels at Delft and Rijswijk railway stations
- a dynamic travel information system now under development in Zoetermeer

All systems work as they should, but together they don't give integral information, by which a traveller can determine, always and everywhere, at home, in his office, en route, what is the best way to get to his destination. Integral travel information services on all roads (motorways, provincial and local arteries), car parks and public transport should lead to more efficient use of infrastructure and better accessibility.

The project must enhance an independent market of travel information. The public authorities give the industry a lift to start these services.

While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of all information in this newsletter, the editor accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies or events arising as a result of decisions based on the information contained within this newsletter.