

Near and Far

Despite the recession, the Railway Consultancy continues to win projects across a range of disciplines and geographical areas. Indeed, in one week, we won contracts as near to and (almost) as far from our office as it is possible to be.



Southern Metro service at West Croydon

Southern approached the Railway Consultancy with two management concerns about suburban services in their 'Metro' area. First, the level of train service performance was lower than management desired whilst, secondly, large numbers of unidentified delays were also being recorded. The Consultancy had a particular interest in this project, as the route which was highlighted for specific attention was that between London Victoria and West Croydon via Crystal Palace, passing directly underneath the Consultancy's offices.

Having checked that the data was indeed correct, the Railway Consultancy then carried out a number of detailed operational surveys of peak operations at Clapham Jc, Balham, Streatham Hill (where station rebuilding work meant that a one-way passenger flow system was in operation) and in Croydon. These surveys identified a wide range of minor issues, each contributing to the generation or propagation of delay. Problems included the late running of empty trains, undue driver variability, route-setting in Three Bridges signalbox, and sub-optimal features of the timetable, including its complexity. Analysis of journey log data also highlighted deficiencies in timetable construction. For instance, between one pair of stations, the timetabled running time had not been achieved in over 220 recorded runs (!), and additional time was recommended for this.

On the other side of the world, the New South Wales Government in Australia is in the early stages of planning a metro for Sydney, to complement existing suburban rail services. Interfleet Technology was appointed to support the set-up of the metro, including the development of operating and commercial procedures; the Railway Consultancy was requested to assist with the latter.

The metro, whose initial phase is limited to the city centre, will both compete with car, bus and suburban rail, and function as a city-centre

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Company News

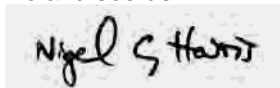
More Changes

As an industry, the railway is increasingly having to be much more responsive to changing situations. This applies to us too.



On the personnel front, Richard Talbot has joined the Company as Principal Consultant. Richard joins us from National Car Parks, where he was the General Manager (Rail), but he also has valuable practical experience from previous jobs which included Group Station Manager for Streatham Hill (with responsibility for Crystal Palace!). As well as bringing his expertise to bear, Richard will also be leading many of our proposals for clients.

Physical changes are also afoot: works for the East London Line to Crystal Palace have recently started, and may affect our office, but we will endeavour to make sure that we maintain contact by e-mail, even if the office needs to be closed temporarily on occasions. And when it's all finished, do come and see us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nigel S Harris".

Environmental Improvements

As is well-known, we have a long-standing principle of minimising our impact upon the environment. Last year, we therefore took the decision to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity supply. With support from Southern and advice from L B Bromley, we have recently had installed on the roof here eight solar panels; these are thought to be the first on a station which is also a listed building. Given the see-saw design of the roof over platforms 3 and 4 here, our panels fit in rather well, as can be seen from the picture below. Having been through the process, we'd be happy to share our experience with others.



We have now signed up with the 'deep green' tariff of Green Energy, which means that the electricity we do consume will all be sourced from renewable sources, so that the carbon footprint for our energy use will become negative. On the other hand, we are continuing to sequester all our CO₂ emissions from travel through a tree-planting scheme organised through the Woodland Trust.

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distributor for the other public transport modes. Using a combination of theoretical background and practical examples, The Railway Consultancy helped to design and test a range fares structures which met the objectives of the metro, including achieving high operating ratios (revenues: costs). We also advised on the potential absolute levels of fares and relevant technological solutions intended to maximize the cost-efficiency of retailing these products within a crowded urban rail environment. Assistance was also given to the development of key performance indicators which might be appropriate for the ongoing stimulation of best practice within the metro, when a contract is let for its operation.

WRI Book

A & N Harris has been appointed to manage the distribution of the book containing the results of the research into Wheel:Rail Interface issues, commissioned following the Hatfield derailment. Whilst Network Rail and TOCs will receive complimentary copies as part of the Inquiry recommendations, copies to other parties will be available shortly from www.anharris.co.uk.

Route Review

We have continued to work on a number of projects in Ireland. As part of the Irish Government's Transport 21 strategy, a number of rail lines are proposed for re-opening. Already under construction is the line from Clonsilla (West of Dublin) to a park and ride site at Pace. However, it is proposed to extend this much further, to Navan, in County Meath, via the town of Dunshauglin. Earlier work had identified a number of options for serving the town, but the route being suggested by Irish Rail had a station to the West of the town, on the far side of a motorway interchange. Various parties had noted that this was not good town planning practice, but a rail planning assessment of the alternatives had not been carried out.

A group of local landowners approached the Railway Consultancy to undertake this analysis, covering engineering, operating and demand forecasting issues. Our colleague David Smith of Thursfield Smith worked with Menolly's engineers to improve a route which provides a station close in to the North East of the town centre. Whilst there were few operating



Main Street, Dunshauglin, County Meath

issues to prefer one route over the other, we also undertook a trip-rate demand forecasting exercise. This demonstrated that the latter route would be expected to have a far higher patronage, and therefore that it could be delivered at no net increase in project cost. A report containing these conclusions was submitted to Meath County Council as part of their planning consultation.

Route Planning in Ethiopia

In a similar vein, but a rather different context, we have recently undertaken some demand and operational planning for the proposed standard-gauge National Railway Network of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a country whose sole existing railway is the largely-defunct Addis Ababa-Djibouti metre gauge line. The alignment of this



Track maintenance leaves something to be desired...

has been subject to a number of problems, as these pictures show.



...whilst this gives a new meaning to animals on the line!

As a result, the economic development of the country is being severely hindered. It is hoped that the new railway will enable the country's mineral resources to be exploited, as well as providing better-quality public transport passenger services.

Project News: At Home

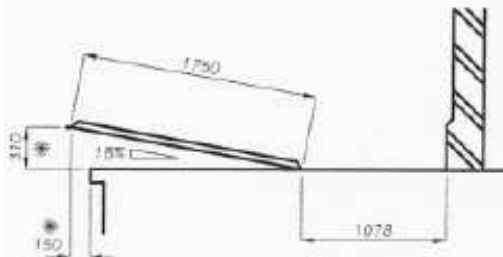
Accessibility

Govia has recently re-won the South Central franchise: Southern will continue as the operator from the new franchise commencement in September this year.



West Croydon Station – to be transferred to TfL

The Railway Consultancy assisted the Govia bid team with proposals for improved network accessibility. Using our experience working on previous successful franchise bids, we helped Govia develop proposals to enhance key areas such as the delivery of Assisted Travel, and use of the station facilities 'Minor Works Fund', both of which have associated franchise commitments. Our ongoing accessibility work for London Midland, which has included the development of Minor Works Fund proposals, also helped us add value in this area.



Kidderminster Access for All scheme

Following the successful result for Govia, we are assisting the mobilisation team with preparations for the new franchise, including the production of a revised Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) and associated Appendices.

As can be seen from the above, the Railway Consultancy provides services across areas such as demand forecasting, operational planning, strategy and business development; for more details see our website www.railcons.com

Car-Parking Strategy

Car Parking is an important method of access to stations for a significant minority of passengers. However, many car parks are close to capacity and this may be having an impact on the ability of passengers to access rail services. In order to quantify this impact, First Capital Connect (FCC) asked The Railway Consultancy to carry out analysis of current and future actual and suppressed demand for car parking at FCC stations. The study was based on available population data, station and car park usage information and included a forward projection across the period to 2021. The data was analysed using a bespoke model constructed specifically for the project. The study was able to demonstrate not only the high levels of suppressed demand for car parking amongst current users of the service, but also the potential additional parking demand created through future rail growth, including the very significant capacity enhancements of the Thameslink project. A prioritised list of locations where car park improvements should be considered was provided along with a summary of next steps.



Overspill parking outside Arlesey station

This study fitted well with the increasing focus on door to door journey planning and improving choice of access modes to stations, for example through the Station Travel Planning process, in which RCL has the relevant capability and expertise.

Contact Details

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