

JUNE 2022

Rail Freight in London

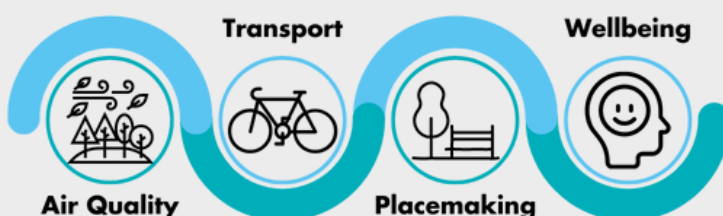
REPORT SUMMARY

Introduction

This Study

This Defra-funded study by Momentum Transport Consultants identifies key barriers and opportunities for the development of a rail freight network in London, to support the integration of rail freight within supply chains and logistics. As road freight disproportionately contributes to air quality, road safety and congestion issues in cities, a reconfiguration of the current freight model has been identified as a key strategy to tackle these issues.

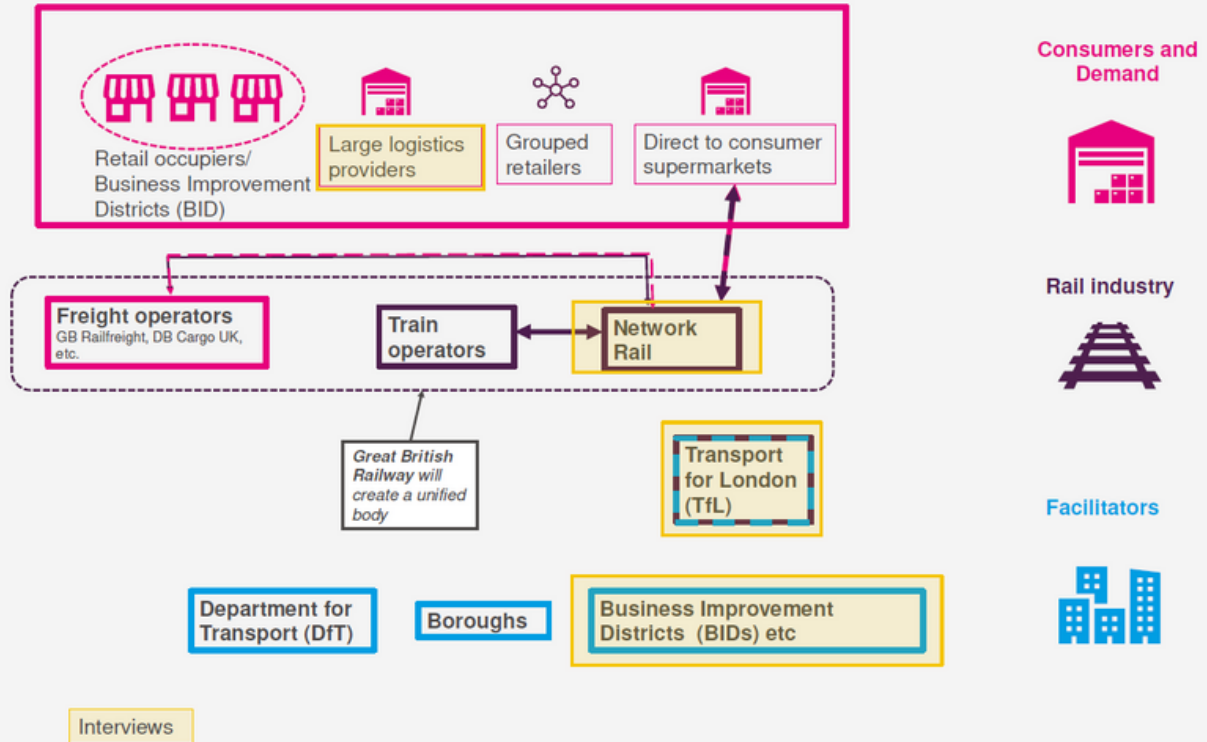
The report finds that there is appetite across the stakeholder spectrum for alternative and more sustainable freight models in central London. Whilst businesses do want a sustainable supply chain, some coordination would be beneficial as they may not have the capacity to each research and support alternative supply chains. For operators, low operating margins and the potential cost of changes to an established supply chain are the key barriers.



About CRP

Cross River Partnership (CRP) is a partnership delivering environmental, economic and community focused projects. We support public, private and voluntary organisations to address creatively challenges around Air Quality, Transport, Placemaking and Wellbeing. CRP's vision is to address sustainability challenges collaboratively in London and beyond. As a testbed for exciting projects in towns and cities, we will share knowledge, evidence, and best practice for the people who live, work and visit these places.

Many Stakeholders

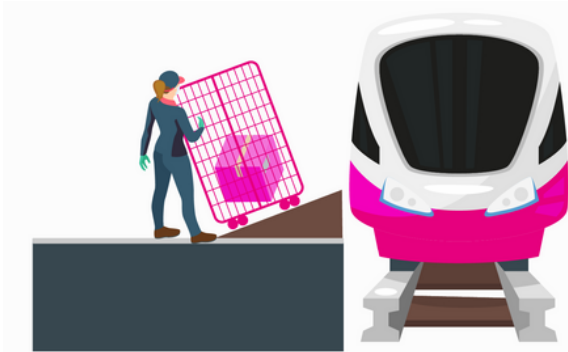


We are nearing the end of a long era of UK freight largely being moved via road. To change this, **all of these stakeholders** will need to be involved.



International Case Studies

However, we can find inspiring case studies from the UK and further afield, including France.



Orion

GB Railfreight



EAST MIDLANDS TRAINS



Sainsbury's



Findings

As freight expands through an increase in home deliveries, building a sustainable freight model becomes essential.

Occupiers, building owners, and individual suppliers increasingly have sustainability as a driving force in their **ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) policies or values**. Within this, establishing **sustainable supply chains** is an area of focus for businesses.

Whilst this may be more established for major product importers, this **trend is spreading** to other businesses and building occupiers, including those buildings with shared building managers or facilities team.

Alongside this, local authorities in London are seeking increasingly stringent and progressive **commitments** to be made by developers at the planning stage for major new developments; in this context, requiring **overnight deliveries** is commonplace in the City of London, as is requiring the use of **consolidation centres** to reduce vehicle numbers through London.

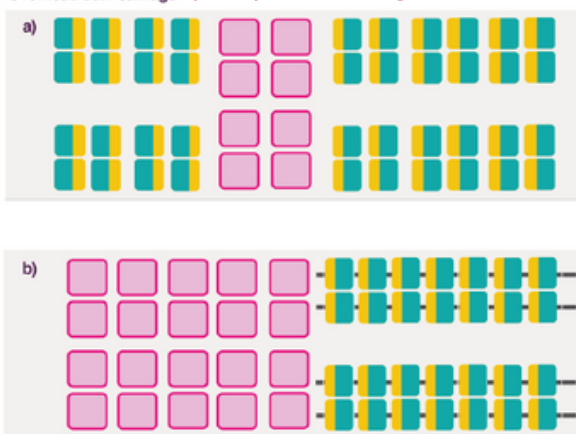


Opportunities

Light Freight on passenger trains, or portions of trains, post-pandemic (freed-up rail capacity)

Both the case studies and interviews demonstrated an eagerness to integrate light freight operations with passenger trains. A factor that was discussed amongst a majority of interviewees is the effect that the reduction in passenger numbers may have on opportunities for freight into central London by rail.

Plan of train carriage showing roller cages and seating:
Overhead train carriage (pink = spaces for roller cages)



Stations' Masterplans

Investments in major central London stations, alongside Network Rail's more flexible approach to their property assets, opens the opportunity for the incorporation of facilitating infrastructure – storage space, charging points – into forthcoming station masterplans.

Great British Railways

Great British Railways' creation in 2023 will offer an opportunity for a more collaborative way of working between freight operators and the rail industry.

Infrastructure

Most central terminus stations have reasonable carriageway access from at least some platforms, enabling potentially efficient operations from a terminus station to final destinations.

Challenges

Cost & Infrastructure

Both infrastructural and operational barriers can limit the potential of rail freight. The primary barrier is low profit margins in the freight sector causing a nervousness amongst operators to fundamental changes to the supply chain.

Station Suitability

Three central London mainline stations have been identified as having good potential for rail freight, with zero emission onward deliveries e.g., cargo bikes. These are:

1. **Euston**
2. **Liverpool Street**
3. **Victoria**



Euston

The station to obtain the overall highest score of suitability is London Euston, which also has the best electric cargo bike catchment score. The walking catchment map shows that London Euston provides good access to residential and non-food retail land uses within a 15min catchment. London Euston is strategically located for both e-cargo bike and pedestrian deliveries if careful management of pedestrian deliveries is put in place. Deliveries should be consolidated and timed in the day by specific destinations to ensure that courier do not have to cross the whole catchment area several times.



Liverpool Street

Liverpool Street has the second-best overall score and best walking catchment overall score, with a high potential for deliveries made by foot. Residential uses are located closer than for London Euston, in Hackney and Tower Hamlet. These are mostly accessible just above a five-minute catchment. Non-food retail is also available across all catchment areas.



Victoria

The walking catchment map shows that there is a high potential for deliveries to be made to the south and east of London Victoria Station, where high level of residential uses are located. Deliveries could be focused on these areas for pedestrian couriers.

The e-cargo bike catchment from Victoria also shows a high potential within a 10-minute catchment area, mainly concentrated south and west of the station. High levels of residential and non-food retail land uses are provided within this catchment. Focusing e-cargo bike deliveries on these area for a trial would be very promising, as deliveries could be made within a small catchment area.

Recommendations

The report culminates in a number of recommendations for implementation in London and beyond. These recommendations can be undertaken simultaneously, one at a time or in any combination. Their implementation will go a long way towards securing a more significant role for rail freight as London re-builds from COVID-19.





You can read the complete report "Rail Freight in London", which was produced as part of Cross River Partnership's Defra-funded Clean Air Villages 4 programme, [HERE](#).

Other Cross River Partnership (CRP) resources that might interest you:

- **Walking Freight**: Report Summary
- **Highways & Footways**: Accessibility Guidelines
- **Light Freight**: Design Solutions for Thames Freight Infrastructure
- **Towards Vision Zero**: Guidelines to help Local Authorities in the development of Road Danger Reduction Strategies and Action Plans
- **The Lived Experience of Our Streets**: A People First Vision for London's Streets
- **Connect 4 Session 3** - Mitigating the negative impact of road traffic in London: Reduction, Innovation and Legislation

If you would like further information about CRP or anything that has been included in this report, please get in touch:

 www.crossriverpartnership.org/newsletter

 crp@crossriverpartnership.org

 07966 201 695

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 CRP YouTube Channel