

## FROM THE PAPERS

Items for “From the Papers” should be sent to Ian McKenzie at 24 Thamespoint, Fairways, Teddington, TW11 9PP (or E-Mail [secretary@lurs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@lurs.org.uk)), and not to the Editor of this journal. Please ensure that contributions are identified by date and source publication.

**24.03.19 WATFORD OBSERVER** – *From Watford Observer 29 March 1991* – “LU has revealed details of an ambitious scheme to link the Metropolitan Line with the British Rail Croxley Green branch line. The £15M link-up, to be achieved by construction of a new viaduct across Watford Road near Cassiobury, would allow Met. Line commuters from Baker Street through travel to Watford High Street and Junction stations. In a further development, LU indicated that obstacles to funding had been removed and that a £6M contribution from Hertfordshire County Council was no longer being sought. The alternative method of funding was by development of land, probably for housing, and which would be freed by the closure of Watford Met station. To compensate West Watford station would be rejuvenated”.

**01.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – An Underground driver who suffers from a form of colour blindness is believed to be the first in the world with that condition to be allowed to drive a subway (sic) train. He has been permitted to work on the Jubilee Line because it no longer has red and green signals and uses automatic trains that “drive themselves”. He is the first of four candidates with “colour vision deficiency” to be approved for driving after TfL began reviewing its vision standards to take account of advances in technology on the Underground. He was formally appointed last month after driving under supervision for a year.

**04.04.19 THE TIMES** – Is the London Underground being used to send subtle messages to MPs as they go to work? On the travel information whiteboard by Westminster station’s ticket barriers a motivational message appeared yesterday that read: “Perfection is not attainable. But if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence”. This the wisdom of Vince Lombardi, an American Football coach, but Theresa May could have written it herself. Some other Lombardi quotes, however, may seem more relevant to the PM’s handling of Brexit, such as “Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing” or “We didn’t lose the game. We just ran out of time”.

**04.04.19 METRO** – MPs have demanded an explanation from the government over who is to blame for Crossrail’s failures. They warned that they were “not convinced” trains will begin running next year or that the £2.8B of additional funding “will be enough”. Passengers have still not been told why London’s new east-west railway is delayed and over budget, a report by the Commons Public Accounts Committee stated. It urged the DfT to make clear what it, TfL and Crossrail Ltd are responsible for in relation to the project. The chairman of the Committee said passengers have been “badly let down” and it is clear the planned opening date was “unrealistic for some time”. She accused the organisations involved of putting on a “positive face” instead of making changes. The DfT should also outline “what the consequences have been” for senior officials after the railway failed to open last December.

**05.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – Strike action to shut down the entire Underground network was threatened today as unions prepared for a major battle over pay. The RMT has rejected as “derisory” a one-year 2.5% increase and is planning a network-wide ballot for industrial action. A four-year pay deal covering all staff has just come to an end and all the unions are preparing demands for another multi-year agreement. A spokesperson for TfL said it believed its offer was “fair and affordable” and looked forward to discussions with the unions continuing. But the RMT leader, Mick Cash, said it had “wholly rejected” the deal. He said, as a result the union will begin preparations for an industrial action ballot and the ball is firmly in LU’s court to come back with an improved offer. The leader of the TSSA union said a meeting on Monday will discuss the one-year offer – but warned that it was “nowhere good enough”. He added: “If it’s rejected our union will go into dispute with LU”.

**08.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – The threat of a summer of discontent on the Underground increased today with a second union rejecting an LU deal on pay – and a third set to do so. ASLEF union said the 2.5% offer “falls way below” demands. The TSSA union was meeting today and poised to reject the deal. It puts LU on a collision course with the combined forces of the three largest unions and raises the prospect of industrial action on the network. The RMT union is also

campaigning for an average 32-hour, four-day week and increases for drivers who volunteer to work on Boxing Day – previously the scene of repeated Christmas walkouts.

**08.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – A disused Victorian railway viaduct in Hammersmith is being lined up as London’s latest answer to New York’s *High Line* linear park. The 200-metre curved stretch of raised track and arches was once part of the Kensington and Richmond line, which opened in 1869 and ceased running in 1916. It has been left overgrown between the Piccadilly and District lines west of Hammersmith station for more than 100 years. But a competition is being launched next week to find ideas to restore the structure to public use. Entrants will get the chance to visit the site. Two prizes of £5,000 are on offer, one for “deliverable” ideas for how the vision could be realised, another for “imaginative” suggestions. The competition is being co-ordinated by architect network West London Link and business group Hammersmith BID as part of the London Festival of Architecture. The winners will be announced on 9 June and entries will be displayed at an exhibition in King’s Mall from 22 to 30 June and beamed onto a screen in Lyric Square.

**10.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – A mural featuring Underground train drivers and station cleaners was unveiled at Brixton station. The 9-metre painting by Mexican-born artist Aliza Nisenbaum was influenced by Brixton murals from the Eighties. She selected 15 staff from Brixton station and the Victoria Line, including train drivers, customer service staff and cleaners. They were then individually painted in her studio to create a large-scale group portrait. It will be on view until 9 September 2019.

**10.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – *Letter by Pat Hughes* – “I once worked for LU and TfL at a blue-collar level. The one thing I could never understand was the gap in pay. What was a train operator doing differently to a railman that deserved any difference in salary? Look at what a customer service agent does for a living, compared with an ATO train operator. The latter opens and closes the train doors, similar to what guards once did, while the former make themselves available to address all passenger needs on any form of language thrown at them. Their body clocks are equally thrown out of kilter in line with the shift patterns. The rules and regulations in their contracts of employment are basically the same, so why the huge wage difference? During peak periods it is not the ATOs who are controlling the masses getting on and off the trains but the station staff on duty that day”.

**10.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – More than 1.0 billion contactless journeys are expected to be made this year on London’s public transport network. The landmark figure shows the dramatic increase in use of bank cards and smartphone apps to pay Underground, bus and train fares in the capital. The contactless system was introduced in 2014 and has soared in popularity, especially as the delay in capping weekly Oyster card fares means it can offer better value. Research by card payment firm *Paymentsense* found that the 1B figure would be reached by the end of 2019, up from 872M last year. TfL suggested that with 21.6M contactless journeys a week, the total could exceed 1.1B. More than 55% of pay-as-you-go journeys are made with contactless, with the remainder using Oyster.

**NEW CIVIL ENGINEER 11.04.19** – A new underground rail line connecting High Speed 2 services at Euston to Canary Wharf in east London is being considered by the government. The proposal to build the line was submitted by developer Canary Wharf Group as part of the government’s call for ideas for market led proposals (MLPs) – a mechanism to invite more private sector funding of rail projects in the UK. The scheme is believed to be one of ten which are being considered and taken forward. 30 schemes were initially submitted to the government as part of the call for ideas, with the list whittled down in December last year. In a letter sent to the London Borough of Southwark planning department, the developer states that it had entered the new line from Euston to Canary Wharf via the City into the MLP process. The new stretch of railway, it stated, would ease congestion on the Jubilee Line. New Civil Engineer also understands that should Crossrail 2 not be built, the new line would ease pressure at Euston with the arrival of the High Speed 2 services in 2026. It would also provide additional capacity at Canary Wharf with the arrival of Crossrail and the development of Wood Wharf, a new district to the east of Canary Wharf. When complete in 2023, the new district would provide over 3,300 new homes, nearly 2M.ft<sup>2</sup> of office space, and a further 490,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of shops, restaurants and community uses. It is understood that the new line will be tunnelled and be around 8.5km in length. The scheme is likely to cost in excess of £5bn, considering the Northern Line Extension is coming in at around £1.2bn for 3.2km of tunnelling, and the Bakerloo

Line Extension is pegged at £3.1bn for 7.5km of tunnel. (*The Jubilee Line Extension resulted from a private proposal for a similar line by the Canary Wharf developer*).

**12.04.19 WATFORD OBSERVER** – *Extract from a Watford Observer item dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 1890* – “The Metropolitan Railway extension to Chesham has opened up to the public a new and delightful country – the Valley of the Chess. The nine-mile stretch from Rickmansworth to quaint old Chesham affords a series of charming vignettes of landscape peculiarly English, and as fresh in its rural simplicity as it was a century ago – an atmosphere unsullied by mephitic vapours, breezy commons, sparkling streams, magnificent beech woods, a wealth of wild flowers, fragrant hedgerows, picturesque cottages, quiet homesteads and historic houses”.

**12.04.19 EVENING STANDARD** – *Notebook by Columnist Joy Lo Dico* – “TfL, I’ve had an idea. The Underground interchanges are packed, and we all need to walk more. How about changing how the Underground pricing works? At the moment, the long and necessary journeys cost more. But why not make those fares cheaper and charge more for short hops? For example, if you are going two Underground stops in Zone 1, that’ll be £5.00. Getting on at Covent Garden to change at Holborn, to go out to Stratford? Make it £5.00 to Holborn – you could have just walked – and then £1.50 to go out east. Just think of it as a penalty fare for laziness”.