



# Light Rail (UK)

Warrington Business Park.

Long Lane.

Warrington, Cheshire, England, United Kingdom.

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## A source of relevant developments and possible funding:

*Road Investment Strategy 2: 2020–2025 (RIS2)* - from DfT and Highways England, with plans for £27.4bn in long-term road network investment and management - including:

delivery of new physical road infrastructure by repurposing lightly used former trunk roads by upgrading of existing assets

ensuring the system is prepared for new and emerging challenges, such as the wider adoption of electric trams and autonomous vehicles

the *Transport Infrastructure Investment Fund* - £1.7bn for improving roads and road safety, priority tram lanes, repairing bridges, and filling in potholes

*Highways England: Strategic Business Plan 2020-2025* - for road project development as part of RIS2's allocated funding, and for developing England's Strategic Road Network (SRN)

Decarbonisation - the Government outlining its vision for a decarbonised road network and changes to its use - which follows key policy initiatives, including:

*Reducing emissions from road transport: Road to Zero Strategy* - the policy, investment, and infrastructure priorities required for transitioning to total zero emission vehicles by 2040

*Government vision for the rapid charge point network in England* - with the *Rapid Charging Fund* announced in *Budget 2020* as part of £500m for EV charging infrastructure

*Gear Change A bold vision for cycling and walking* - with £2bn for walking and cycling infrastructure development can run parallel and give access t to other transport modes

*New Station Guidance* - from Network Rail and Highways England on developing local rail and road transport system links, aimed at relieving pressure on the SRN and improving local access

As buses run on rubber tyres and a high fine particulate pollution and a low modal switch, we see buses in this arena as feeder vehicles to the low-cost tram corridor

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provide a quick green corridor but not as a high-speed alternative to that experienced by the car user currently on the M4

Another underused example is the A57, West of Manchester a mixture of dual carriageway, three lane and a bypass from Eccles, Irlam, Cadishead, Warrington, Halton and on to Liverpool Airport and Central Liverpool

Using a P+R at Junction 21 M6 traffic going East into Manchester would use large parts of the upgraded but quiet sections through Cadishead, Irlam, Eccles Centre into Manchester via the A57 track sharing with Manchester Metrolink Eccles to Langworthy Section

There is provision for a P+R at Bell Stadium and connection with Metrolink Trafford Park to syphon off and modal switch from the M60 Motorway Ring road

These are just two of today's equivalent of former rail alignments being repurposed and maximising the economic impact of the SRN - access to intermodal transport, and providing the connectivity needed for businesses, communities, and households for a much lower cost and value to the Taxpayer

Next steps, the Major Road Network and local road modernisation - improving local access and reliability, tackling potholes and road quality, and meeting changing needs for low cost sustainable public transport using steel on steel in the street will prepare the road network for decarbonisation by 2050 - scaling up low-carbon transport infrastructure, EV charging in the P+R areas, and options for active travel

Costings will be varied but a UKTram figure circa £9-12 Million per track kilometre will certainly be lower than budgeted for in RIS2

A pump priming initial study is called for to identify where these assets are and can easily be brought into use for the green benefit of all



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The National Road Fund (NRF) will also provide funding to enhance the Major Road Network (MRN), the most important roads owned and operated by local highway authorities and contribute to large local major road schemes. This investment complements the funding the Department provides for maintenance of local roads and will help secure a consistent and coherent network of regionally important roads that are seamlessly integrated with the SRN.

Roads, especially repurposed roads are, and will remain, vital to our way of life and part of our SRN encompasses the roads that are most important for people to get around the country and for businesses to receive supplies and get their goods to market. Our amended plan will help ensure that they continue to deliver for the country.

After seventy years + of road building which is clear to most observers that we cannot build more roads out of the scenario where we are today, the proposed RIS2 needs to address the significant threat now facing us in the form of Climate Change and with a little step change in thinking and funding, the principles of Decarbonising Transport, with a vision for how a net zero transport system will benefit us all

Public urban transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for our daily activities. We will use our cars less and be able to rely on a convenient, cost-effective, and coherent public transport network.

In the process of road building to where we are today, a significant number of towns and suburbs have lost most of their traffic to the much faster newer bypasses and Motorways leaving these fine trunk roads carrying a shadow of their former vehicle numbers and in some cases being downgraded to either a local road or a B road although the infrastructure still remains to a continually expensively high standard and can still provide some of the following benefits such as connectivity between key motorway and A roads, rail and airports and further intermodal links, urban areas and other centres of business, commercial activity and employment. Economic contribution - supporting the levelling up policy agenda and helping improve efficiency for commerce, trade, and the indirect movement of freight Future proofing - assessing and factoring in future green and sustainable capacity pressures and changes in user demands, and strategies for reducing interruptions and enabling quicker journeys

A good example where this could be done is the A48 Southern Distributor Road running West towards Cardiff from Newport near Junction 28 M4 via the B4487, A4161, A4160 This road has been downgraded since the coming of the M4 but the wide road infrastructure remains in most parts giving significant local connectivity

The M4 which has now been saturated at peak to the point of that an alternative Motorway style road was proposed but has been refused on environmental grounds

This is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century version of the former railway alignment idea and should be used for a local low-cost frequent service tramway technology (already developed) to siphon off with a P+R near Junction 28 to access Cardiff and other transport modes along line of route. With this road as it is currently lightly used, can readily be repurposed. It has a variety of speed limits from 30 MPH to 60 MPH and will



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21<sup>st</sup> October 2020

## Repurposing former Trunk Roads

When the second generation of trams now known as Light Rail started with Nexus, Manchester Metrolink, Sheffield, Croydon, Nottingham, Edinburgh, and Midland Metro much use was given to former heavy rail alignments and incorporated into the subsequent routes.

This was done mainly to save costs and were adapted and broadly speaking made to fit in with the proposed route.

There are still several potential former railway alignments which could still be used.

Since the end of World War 2 our Strategic Road Network have been improved to the- connectivity, efficiency, and wider economic benefits· Involving local supply chains in regional road projects and opportunities for infrastructure-led economic recovery. This has led to maximising the economic impact of the SRN - access to intermodal transport, and providing the connectivity needed for businesses, communities, and households

Tackling legal and regulatory hurdles for road projects and infrastructure development in the UK and ultimately delivering physical road upgrade projects in England and strategies for overcoming engineering challenges

Over this period, we have seen small trunk roads being rebuilt to three lane, dual carriageway standards and eventually in many locations a bypass has been built to relieve congestion and pressure on the bottle neck towns and dormitory areas

Eventually the top of the range motorway roads were built initially dual carriageway with third and sometimes fourth lanes added until they in their turn were saturated and today we have a new Government Policy, The Second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) which sets out the government's plans for developing and improving the Strategic Road Network between 2020/21 and 2024/25, so that its long-term vision for a network that is safe, reliable and efficient for everyone is met. £27.4bn will be made available to fund the operation, maintenance, renewal, and enhancement of the network that will move us closer to that vision, through a detailed Investment Plan and a robust and tested Performance Framework.

When the RIS2 was launched Transport Secretary the Rt Hon Grant Shapps Secretary of State for Transport said "If we are to invest £27.4 billion over the next five years on our strategic road network, it is crucial that we use this funding to improve the lives of all."

"Through this investment we want to make the network safer, more reliable, and more."

Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) 2020–2025 sensitive to the places through which it runs. With a stronger focus on the differing needs of road users and adoption of new working practices and tram technologies, we want people using the network to enjoy smoother, more consistent journeys.

By making the most of green infrastructure and good design, we want people living alongside the network to experience less noise, light, and air pollution. And this addition to RIS2 must support the Government's wider plans for decarbonising road transport.