



## CrossRail

D. L. Heath

*The Perceptions and Impressions Company*, Wiltshire, *The Perceptions and Impressions Company*

I would like to offer the following discussion contribution regarding the CrossRail papers in the *Transport Journal* in May 2001.

I am currently engaged by an Inner London borough upon the London Bus Initiative programme, a project that is dealing with the problems that real Londoners face in attempting to travel around the capital, not theoretically modelled passenger numbers.

In the first paragraph of the Introduction to the CrossRail papers, Mr Heath states that the four major rail proposals 'are envisaged to meet most of London's public transport needs well into the 21st century'.

CrossRail will probably improve the value of my house in Great Missenden, and I shall be able to enjoy an even better journey into central London. I thank the perpetrators heartily for this but I fail to understand how these radial routes will do anything of significance to contribute to the desperately needed improvements for journeys with origins and destinations inside London. They may take some of the pressure off a few lengths of existing Metro lines but how will they address the problem of the grossly inadequate intermediate layer of public transport—currently a congested bus network and a decrepit heavy rail system?

The schemes will not meet most of London's public transport needs and are more likely to have only a marginal overall effect. They will be of benefit to those few people who live within easy walking distance of the few stations inside the GLA boundary and will have a very nice effect indeed for landowners at the railheads in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Sussex. Is that really the best we can do?

### Author's reply

I fully understand, and accept, the point which Mr. Wiltshire makes. However, the origin of the statement made in my paper is, quite simply, a direct lift from the Central London Rail Study which was published in the 1980s and is cited in the references.

I think that the real point is that the quotation I have used refers to 'the journeys to work' for residents of the Greater London area travelling into central London, whereas the studies which Mr Wiltshire is carrying out include the totality of journeys within his particular borough.

It should also be noted that the world we live in is a dynamic one and what was true at the time of the study in the mid-1980s is not necessarily exactly identical now.