

# Waterloo Station Freight Hub

Unlocking the logistics potential of a central London station



Cross River Partnership (CRP), the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) and Network Rail, along with partners including London Borough of Southwark, London Borough of Lambeth, Department for Transport, London and Continental Railways, Waterloo Station, Steer and Intermodality, have been working to unlock the logistics potential of a large space beneath Waterloo Station. The station is strategically located and well connected to other transport modes and in the heart of London, offering the potential to develop multi-modal logistics that integrates rail freight. Transferring road freight to a combination of rail and zero-emission cargo bikes would help remove vans from both London's streets and regional roads.

## CRP's work so far

CRP have been exploring the barriers and opportunities for integrating rail freight into the logistics process in London. In March 2023, funded by Impact On Urban Health and Defra, a CRP report 'On track for sustainable logistics' identified infrastructural opportunities in Lambeth and Southwark to support rail freight. Two operating models were explored, 'Parcels as Passengers' and 'a Dedicated Freight Multiple Unit'.

The Parcels as Passengers model utilises unused space on existing passenger services, and as such has lower barriers to entry, as existing stock can be used and minimal infrastructure modifications are required. This approach was highlighted in the report as the quickest option to begin delivering freight into Waterloo, whilst a Dedicated Freight Multiple Unit would allow for the most transformative change and improvements to social, environmental and economic factors locally and across London.

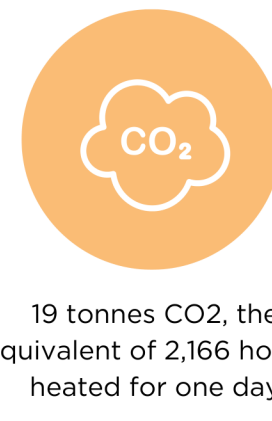


Image credit: Steer (2023)

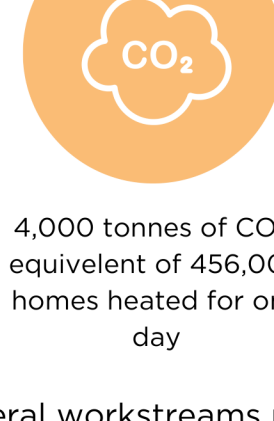
The report also identified Waterloo Station - a terminus with good local links and links to the South West - as a credible option for further exploration. Since then, CRP has been conducting significant stakeholder engagement to secure buy-in and has set up a working group to understand further actions needed to pursue a light freight hub at Waterloo Station.

## Benefits

The favoured Parcels as Passengers model has projected benefits including the annual removal of:



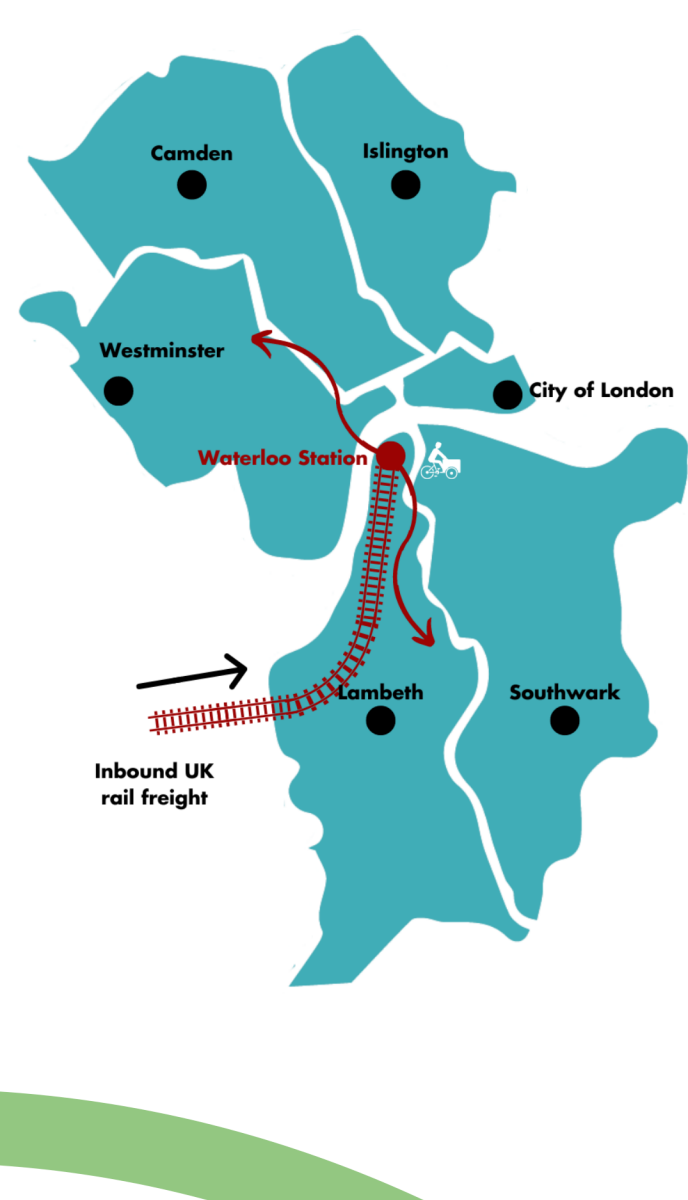
The Dedicated Freight Multiple Unit model sees these projected benefits hugely increased, demonstrating the transformative potential of rail freight if the approach is scaled up:



To realise these potential benefits, CRP has several workstreams planned to further develop trial opportunities and make the case for rail freight at Waterloo Station.

## Waterloo Station - A strategic central location

The undercroft space beneath Waterloo Station covers around 100,000 - 200,000 sq ft, and is comprised of several large, interconnected arches and spaces, many of which are currently underutilised. These spaces are highly accessible, with step-free routes connecting them to from both street level and platform level. Waterloo Station itself sits at a significant location: near to the strategic road network, the Thames, and close to the borough borders of Southwark, Lambeth, Westminster, City of London, Camden and Islington.



The network of spaces combined with the strategic location of Waterloo mean there is significant potential for a light freight hub to be developed. The spaces could be used for receiving rail and river goods, storage, consolidation and sorting, and onwards distribution using zero-emission vehicles, in an important central London location.

## Next steps for CRP and partners

CRP are working on activities to support the development of a light freight hub trial at Waterloo Station, by funding research into the potential of the space and the express rail freight market, which will help CRP to engage with local stakeholders to implement a funded trial at Waterloo Station. These have and will be funded through the Defra-funded Clean Air Logistics for London and Smarter Greener Logistics programmes, and will be completed by Autumn 2023.

- Road fed freight hub trial. CRP will be funding a 6-month micro-logistics hub for a freight operator in the undercroft of Waterloo Station. A road-fed trial will help develop key learnings around how the space functions, and will help inform future rail-fed freight programmes.
- Basic and advanced rail freight hub modelling - these will model the operations of the rail-fed freight hub and attempt to quantify the benefits, as well as considering different scenarios for the hub.
- Socio-economic impact assessment - this will demonstrate how the hub could operate and what economic, social and environmental benefits it could deliver, supplemented by case studies.
- Rail freight market research - an investigation into the existing rail freight market landscape and potential directions it may take.
- Freight train path capacity planning - analysis and modelling of potential routes, looking at existing timetables and train networks, and how a rail freight trial could fit into this.

CRP will continue to share emerging outcomes from these pieces of research with the Waterloo Masterplan Steering Group, that is developing a vision for Waterloo Station moving forward.

## What is Clean Air Logistics for London?

Cross River Partnership's Clean Air Logistics for London Programme (CALL) is a Defra-funded project led by Westminster City Council in collaboration with 12 project partners. The project aims to move more freight into London via river rather than road, supported by zero emission delivery methods in Central London. CALL will build on the success of CRP's Clean Air Villages 4 programme.

The CALL project will expand river freight in London, reducing both congestion and pollution at the same time. A lack of light freight being moved by river has been highlighted and investment in infrastructure is required to increase the viability of this. CALL locations have been chosen to reflect GLA Air Quality Focus Areas and the importance of the River Thames for freight. The CALL project will support the delivery of Defra's Clean Air Strategy, Westminster City Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) and other's partners air quality objectives.



## Project Partners

Cross River Partnership is proud to be working with the following Local Authorities and other partners.

