



Although the fuel protesters appear to have failed to screw yet more concessions from the Government, the road lobby must be laughing.

Despite road building being discredited and the dangers of global warming becoming so obvious that even an American gas guzzler is beginning to see the problem, the British Government continues to rely on expanding road capacity just when it should be cutting it back.

The price of crude oil is becoming untenable but a desperate search is on for alternative fuels so the "great car economy" can carry on polluting.

One man is even running his car on waste oil from kebab vans.

Despite Transport 2000 wake-up calls (pictured below), drivers show little sign of adjusting to the new realities. The amount of money collected by speed cameras has gone

up by 500% in two years. Instead of slowing down, some are paying large amounts of money for in-car camera detectors so they can carry on speeding – where they can get away with it.

In mainland Europe, rail continues to advance. The 20-mile-long Lotschberg tunnel through the Alps from Germany to Italy is on schedule to open in two years time. Italy is preparing to build its

first genuine high-speed line from Rome to Naples, following the interim use of tilting trains.

Having built two high-speed lines, Spain is now considering a line from the Basque country to Catalonia. In France, the home of high-speed rail, the response to a government plan to cut cross-country trains was a protest march in Paris in September.

It is the rural and cross-country lines which are the key to a sustainable future in both France and Britain. In Germany, the experiment in mixing light and heavy rail continues with a recent expansion of the Achern to Ohringen line.

But in Britain, campaigners trying to get the Bedford-Sandy rail line reinstated have discovered that £39million is being spent on the Great Barford bypass, £30million on the Clapham bypass, and £490million on the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton road "improvement". A further £340million is likely to be spent on the A1 road in the area.

A small proportion of that money could have rebuilt both the Bedford-Sandy and Bedford-Northampton rail lines and given us all a better chance of a sustainable future.



If you are not a member of Railfuture but want to join the fight for a better railway in Britain, send £18 to Membership Secretary, 6 Carral Close, Lincoln LN5 9BD. You will receive four copies of *Railwatch* a year

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