

NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION CALL FOR EVIDENCE

RESPONSE FROM THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

1. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES FACING LONDON AND ITS COMMUTER HINTERLAND OVER THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DECADES?

London's population is rising rapidly, a predicted increase to 10 million people by the early 2030s is now being seen as a conservative estimate. Research by consultancy Atkins, in partnership with Oxford Economics and the Centre for London, claims London's population will actually become home to 12 million people by 2050, surpassing even the GLA estimate of 11.3 million. It also claims that there will be 6.3m workers by 2026 rather than 2050 as currently estimated.

London's overall employment growth is to a large part driven by its role as a leading world class city. The largest density of high value activities associated with this reputation are primarily located within inner London, an area defined as the Central Activities Zone of which Hackney forms a part. This area hosts over 30 per cent of London's jobs.

London's continued economic growth will, alongside demographic factors, drive an increase in population numbers. Current GLA forecasts show Hackney's population alone is predicted to increase by between 100-150,000 between 2011 and 2050.

Unless the supply of housing, new employment space and infrastructure is increased across the capital in line with population growth and the predictions of growth are used to anticipate both the investment and delivery of infrastructure, London's economy will falter.

While rail provides the main backbone of the transport system, London's buses tend to provide local links and with an affordable fare system. However, the streets are increasingly having to cater for higher volumes of pedestrians and cyclists and for servicing and freight logistic requirements as population densities increase.

To cope with the increase in population and economic activity London's current infrastructure must continue to expand to cater for additional demand. From utilities, particularly water and electricity, to Local Government and local public services such as Education, Health and Social Care provision. All will need to receive adequate revenue and capital investment from both public and private sources to keep pace with demand and maintain London's competitiveness.

2 WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT IN LARGE-SCALE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN LONDON – ON ROAD, RAIL, AND UNDERGROUND – INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO CROSSRAIL 2?

- **How should they be prioritised, taking account of their response to London's strategic transport challenges, including their impact on capacity, reliability, journey times and connectivity to jobs?**
- **What might their potential be on employment, productivity and housing supply in London and the SE?**

The Council would suggest that the infrastructure requirements needed are outlined in the Mayor of London's Infrastructure Plan 2050 and subsequent updates. We would specifically refer to the following as relevant to Hackney:

CROSSRAIL 2

Crossrail 2 is needed to address capacity constraints that will exist on the London Overground and Underground. It will allow up to 270,000 more people to travel into central London during the weekday morning peak period. This scheme is seen as a priority.

The Case for an eastern alignment on the route

However, although Crossrail 2 will improve public transport connectivity to and from Dalston the Council considers that an additional eastern alignment would cater for further growth in Hackney Central and Hackney Wick before heading east to Essex via Newham and Barking & Dagenham.

When this option was first examined we note that the original projections from September 2012 indicated an increase in population of 101,000 and 85,000 additional jobs associated with it.

Significantly since those figures population growth projections for London have been revised upwards with population growths of 30% now forecast in Hackney and Barking alone by 2041 and 50% in Newham for the same period. Thus there will be an expectation of greater population growth along the route on the eastern branch in the order of 330,000 in those 3 Boroughs alone. On job increases these are forecast to rise by 150,000 in Tower Hamlets (mainly around Canara Wharf), 20,000 in Hackney and 70,000 in Newham, again by 2041. This points very much to the idea of the eastern branch having primarily a strong regeneration case and would greatly strengthen the need and business case for the railway.

The LLDC is on target to build 24,000 new homes by 2031 and is already delivering in excess of the London Plan housing target of 1,471 homes per annum. Enhanced connectivity has the potential to increase these figures considerably.

The proposed Crossrail 2 alignments to the northern route have also been promoted as they would relieve overcrowding on both the Victoria and Piccadilly lines. These lines have planned capacity increases of 9% and 60% respectively yet the Crowding Map for 2041 shows little overcrowding on the Piccadilly line north of Manor House.

Proposals for the routing of the eastern branch have indicated two potential alignments towards Stratford. One of these alignments suggests the possibility of an underground Crossrail 2 station at Hackney Wick. The Council commissioned consultants to prepare a report on the feasibility and business case for such a station. The report suggested that the amount of developable land within a 12 minute catchment could deliver associated regeneration benefits in the order of £1.4 billion, well in excess of the benefits necessary to justify a new station.

Accordingly, in any further work on the eastern branch Hackney would seek to have a station at Hackney Wick that would afford a level of relief on the already congested London Overground and also assist in relieving the crowding scenario forecast for 2041. A station in the Hackney Wick area would also unlock growth opportunities in the NW part of the LLDC area which has been identified in their Local Plan to 2031 as having the weakest public transport links.

A future station at Stratford

Currently Crossrail 2 are considering two potential alignments through the Stratford and Olympic Park area for the eastern branch. This consists of a southern alignment with a station at Fish Island and Stratford Regional and northern alignment with a station at Hackney Wick and north of the International Station at Stratford.

The International Quarter at Stratford will accommodate 25000 people. Here East, a new creative and digital hub is expanding to provide jobs in the media, creative and cultural industries. In addition the 2014 Employment Land Review estimates that employment growth in the LDDC area will provide an additional 44,700 to 47,000 jobs by 2031.

Both Hackney and Newham Councils consider the northern alignment to offer the best long term solution for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Hackney Wick, Stratford City, Stratford Regional Station and the High Speed Kent lines. This would provide a well served national and potentially international high speed, light and heavy rail interchange facility. This option is preferred as it would:

- Link up the International Station with the High Speed Kent services, the DLR and Overground providing relief to Stratford Regional Station and the southern entrance to Westfield Stratford as well as directly serve any forthcoming developments there such as the emerging Stratford City office quarter and the completion of the Olympic & Paralympic Legacy project.
- Relieve the 2041 crowding scenario identified at Stratford Regional on both the Central line and the new Crossrail 1 corridors and would make use of spare capacity on the Jubilee line to serve Canary Wharf.

In addition to locating a Crossrail 2 station north of the CTRL box, the development of a surface station at High Meads loop in close proximity to the International and DLR station would further enhance the hub arrangement. Such a station could allow Lea Valley Line services to utilise the loop at Stratford and provide additional platform capacity for Lea

Valley Line services and provide additional resilience for the Overground when congestion occurs.

Finally a further benefit of developing an additional interchange station at this location would result in higher PTAL levels and a corresponding increase in development values thus freeing areas currently inefficiently devoted to parking.

In order to promote the case for an eastern alignment we have collaborated with the London Boroughs of Newham and Barking & Dagenham, together with Essex County Council to commission a study into a possible eastern option.

Barking & Dagenham have ambitious plans already underway, to position Barking as a place to accelerate the areas growth potential and encouraging inward investment to build new homes and create new jobs. A number of key sites have been identified in and around Barking town centre which have the potential to unlock further growth together with developments further east at Beam Park in close proximity to the C2C line. A direct rail link between Barking town centre and the Stratford rail hub, which an eastern route for Crossrail 2 could provide, is a key infrastructure requirement.

The Study is expected to report in mid-February, and we would be happy to share any recommendations and conclusions from the study.

Continue to improve the London Overground Network

The expansion of the London Overground Network has been a success story with large increases in passenger numbers being accommodated with longer trains. More frequency increases and improvements are planned and the transfer of services to TfL has witnessed a transformation in the quality of the service as well as improvements to stations.

However, further growth in the coming decades will result in severe overcrowding on some sections of the E-W route between Stratford and Highbury & Islington, the line serves Dalston Kingsland, Hackney Central, Homerton and Hackney Wick.

London has seen the benefits of improved interchanges such as the one at Hackney Central/Hackney Downs which has already exceeded its first year target for patronage. The effect of this has, however, put pressure on the existing Hackney Central station which together with Dalston Kingsland, Homerton and Hackney Wick will need complete reconstruction to be able to cope with future increases in demand.

We note that TfL are about to submit plans to provide short term improvements to Hackney Central. Although these are welcome they are barely proposing to keep pace with existing demand let alone future demand.

On the N-S routes, recently taken over by TfL we note that the stations are characterised by poor or outdated infrastructure and we would also wish to see these brought up to standard alongside enhanced services.

Demand for rail travel in east London and north east London along the Lea Valley Corridor is expected to grow heavily in the next decade. Hackney Council is a member of the West

Anglia Routes Group which is working with TfL and Network Rail to seek a commitment to address ongoing constraints arising from having Lea Valley services better suited to a four track mainline currently operating on a two track railway.

Although three tracking is currently planned it is important that further improvements are initiated able to lead to more frequent services along the Liverpool Street to Cambridge corridor.

Continued investment on the Tube network

Whilst we acknowledge that there are no Underground stations in Hackney we nevertheless support continued improvements to the Underground network backed by investment into new rolling stock, signalling and capacity improvements.

We would suggest that the Waterloo & City Line be given priority for investment with walk through trains to enable more passengers to be carried as an early win in advance of Crossrail 2 opening. This line provides a strategic fast connecting link between north and south London. For Hackney this is via the Central Line which serves the area around Liverpool Street and Bethnal Green, both stations close to Hackney's borough boundary.

Improvements to the bus network

Although bus services are of a more local importance we would suggest that their continued improvement is as equally important in social and economic terms. A high quality affordable, reliable and efficient bus network is essential to a prosperous capital city.

Many workers rely on buses to commute at all times of night and day. Buses are also a lifeline for an increasing elderly population who rely on them to improve their mobility.

Buses are also a relatively cheap form of public transport able to swiftly provide new residential or employment areas with improved accessibility levels. Capital investment will be needed for both the bus fleet and bus priority measures to continue to ensure a reliable and efficient bus network has priority on the capital's streets.

Cycling and Walking

We fully support local transport modes and call for Cycling and Walking to be seen as part of the UK's transport national infrastructure programme.

Hackney's Transport Strategy is seeking a cycling modal share of target (for all journeys) of 20% in 2031. A continued investment into key cycling routes, contra-flow cycling measures and safety improvements at key junctions are the type of capital interventions required.

The Council strongly supports walking as an active travel mode and to this end has identified and will continue to identify areas where public realm improvements can bring improvements to promote this mode of travel. A growing population will demand an increasing focus on improving walking and cycling infrastructure within the capital.

3.WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO INCREASE THE BENEFITS AND REDUCE THE COSTS OF THE PROPOSED CROSSRAIL 2 SCHEME

A significant step has already been taken to increase the benefits by opting for the 'regional' rather than the 'metro' route to maximise access to areas where growth is envisaged.

However, further benefits could be achieved for and by the scheme if the option to unlock the potential additional growth in the east is embraced.

Further analysis is required to define the benefits and quantify the reduction in cost to the scheme and we would support the call for this work to be initiated.

The Council would also suggest that opportunities to enter into joint ventures between public and private organisations be explored. The aim to achieve greater value for the scheme and provide a return on public and private assets in addition to socio-economic outcomes.

4. WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR THE FUNDING, FINANCING AND DELIVERY OF LARGE-SCALE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN LONDON, INCLUDING CROSSRAIL 2?

- **What is an appropriate local and regional contribution – given the potential distribution of benefits to businesses, residents, transport users and the wider economy – and how could this be achieved?**
- **What innovative funding mechanisms could be considered to support delivery of key schemes?**

As has been stated by London Councils in their submission we acknowledge that London Boroughs will need to contribute to the funding for Crossrail 2 and to this end support proposals for London as a whole to contribute up to half the cost. As the beneficiaries will be residents and businesses it is appropriate that there are contributions from both.

We have looked at the suggestions in the PWC report for a delayed start to the project but feel that the urgency is such that the start needs if anything, to be brought forward.

Residents and businesses outside London who are connected to the route and receive the benefits of Crossrail 2 should also contribute in the same way that London's residents and businesses will contribute.