

## **National Infrastructure Commission Evidence on Infrastructure Improvements in London**

### **London Borough of Waltham Forest Proposal for a Crossrail 2 Line**

Waltham Forest Council supports in principle introducing major new public transport infrastructure to accommodate an increase in London's population from 8.6 million today to a predicted 10 million by 2030. The Crossrail 2 scheme on its safeguarded alignment would provide significant additional public transport capacity to the north east sub region of London. The current proposals for connections towards Broxbourne and New Southgate would facilitate development in the boroughs of Hackney, Haringey and Enfield. However, the current safeguarded scheme does not connect eastwards to Waltham Forest, meaning that the borough will derive limited benefit from the scheme.

The current scheme does indicate the possibility of a future eastern spur but no information on the alignment of this is currently indicated. Waltham Forest Council considers that an eastern spur should be an essential element of the Crossrail 2 scheme from the outset. The Council would welcome the opportunity to explore the detailed alignment of this spur with stakeholders and delivery partners to ensure the borough has sufficient transport infrastructure in place to accommodate continued economic and housing growth.

In terms of the strategic role of Crossrail 2, the Council supports the key objective of accommodating housing growth and regeneration and also considers that the scheme has an important function in terms of relieving congestion on existing underground and suburban rail network. A scheme introduced on the safeguarded route would substantially reduce overcrowding on the Piccadilly and Victoria lines and on the West Anglia rail routes to East Hertfordshire and West Essex.

A potential eastern spur of Crossrail 2 would perform a similar dual function: regeneration and congestion relief. An eastern branch would help relieve congestion on the Central line which would otherwise be expected to become critical all the way from central London to Leytonstone. Latest Transport for London modelling suggests that between four and five passengers per square metre will be forced to stand by 2041 from Leytonstone with existing committed schemes in place.

With regard to the relocation of certain types of land use, such as employment land and open space, Waltham Forest Council seeks to retain these where possible, particularly employment land as this is in short supply in the borough. However, we recognise that there is a case for redesignation of land for housing-led development around public transport nodes where it is possible to implement high density residential development, in turn contributing to the cost of delivering transport infrastructure improvements. The Council has identified a number of such opportunities and is already delivering significant housing growth through the delivery of GLA Housing Zones in the west of the borough.

Work carried out for the development of TfL's North London Sub Regional Transport Plan shows that Waltham Forest has seen a higher population growth in recent years than neighbouring areas. Indeed, research carried out by the Council indicates that the actual population in the southern part of Waltham Forest is considerably higher than that indicated

by the census. This population growth is expected to continue over the next 20 years as the borough is both a desirable place to live and, relative to inner London, provides a greater range of accommodation that is more reasonably priced.

The borough has an ambitious target to deliver 12,000 new homes in the next five years, the majority these being in the southern half of the borough (the area that would benefit from a connection to Crossrail 2) with further growth planned for the following decades. There is scope for several thousand new homes in the Leyton area on a number of major development sites such as Leyton Mills Retail Park, along Orient Way and a possible scheme to deck over the A12 at Leyton/Leytonstone Central Line Stations which is being developed by Transport for London.

In recent years, Waltham Forest Council has worked with a range of strategic stakeholders and delivery partners to secure significant investment for the development and infrastructure at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park which sits to the south of the borough; on the business case and delivery plan for Lea Bridge Station which will open in May 2016; and the introduction of network improvements and investment in transport infrastructure across east London's Overground network. On the basis of this track-record, the Council is extremely keen to work with partners to develop plans for an eastern spur of Crossrail 2 that facilitates further growth and capacity improvements in the borough and the east London sub-region as a whole.