

## **Silvertown Tunnel - Stakeholder Event**

On 15 October 2014 TfL hosted a stakeholder event to announce the river crossings programme and launch the consultation on the proposed Silvertown Tunnel.

Michèle Dix, TfL Managing Director for Planning presented the programme.

The presentation set out the need for new river crossings in east London highlighting the current congestion faced, the lack of resilience in river crossings and the predicted high level of growth in jobs and population for east and southeast London. It was explained that following a recent consultation on river crossings east of Silvertown, TfL will progress the next round of work on fixed link crossings at both Gallions Reach and Belvedere, which were heavily supported by the consultation responses.

TfL has now launched a consultation on the Silvertown Tunnel plans which is open until 19 December 2014. This consultation contains details of:

- The need for the Silvertown Tunnel including relieving regular congestion at Blackwall and helping to accommodate the needs of London's growing population
- Some changes to the road network on the immediate approach to the Tunnel on both sides of the river in order to link it to the existing road network
- The opportunities to deliver new and improved public transport connections as a result of the Tunnel
- Information about the proposed user charge which will help manage demand and provide a source of revenue to fund construction and operation of the Tunnel
- The anticipated effect on traffic, noise and air quality.

An application to build and operate the Tunnel will be made in December 2015 through the Development Consents Order process.

Howard Dawber from the Canary Wharf Group then addressed the session emphasising his strong support of the proposed Silvertown Tunnel and additional crossings. The presentation outlined the essential need for further river crossings and provided information about the current commuter trends to/from Canary Wharf and highlighted the fact that the vast majority of suppliers to the area currently originate from the north side of the river, emphasising the need for further crossings to address this inequity. Howard also stressed that the crossings should be delivered as part of a package, including improved public transport links to improve connectivity in the region.

Around 35 stakeholders attended the event (listed in Appendix A) including representatives from London Local Authorities, business and industry groups as well as other key interested parties. Following presentations from Michèle and Howard, there was a question and answer session with the attendees.

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## **Notes from question and answer session with attendees**

### ***Representative from South East Chamber of Commerce:***

Concerns that the proposed user charging will impose unfairly on east Londoners. Suggestions that if charging is necessary for funding, then all London river crossings should be subject to charge, not just Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels.

### ***Response***

The charges proposed at Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels are necessary to manage traffic and fund the new infrastructure. This new infrastructure will bring considerable benefits to the region and if we want crossings to happen quickly then we need to introduce charges.

The consultation includes a paper on charging proposals (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-draft-outline-strategy-for-user-charging.pdf>) and comments are sought.

### ***John Biggs, Assembly Member***

Questions potential changes to traffic routes (and potential new areas of congestion) around the proposed tunnel and impact on air quality.

### ***Response***

The Silvertown Tunnel will reduce congestion at the existing Blackwall Tunnel by providing an alternative route and helping to redistribute traffic. Overall congestion will reduce and as a result poor air quality associated with congestion will improve. The consultation includes documents setting out predicted traffic flow changes (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-traffic-forecasting-report.pdf>) and preliminary emissions information (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-tunnel-enviro-report.pdf>).

The next phase of work will model how the change in emissions will influence localised concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> and how they affect receptors (e.g. homes and schools). This will be reported in the consultation planned for mid 2015.

***Councillor, Greenwich Council***

Concerns about the lack of detailed information on the proposal, changes in air quality, the proposed user charge and the potential for increased traffic and congestion through Greenwich.

***Response***

The Silvertown Tunnel will relieve congestion at Blackwall, improve the resilience of the network and provide the opportunity to introduce new public transport connections across east London. The consultation website sets out the predicted changes to traffic flows in the local area

(<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-traffic-forecasting-report.pdf>). It also includes preliminary emissions information (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-tunnel-enviro-report.pdf>) and a paper on charging proposals (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-draft-outline-strategy-for-user-charging.pdf>).

***Representative from Friends of the Earth***

Raised concerns about air pollution and increased volumes of traffic. Requests a package solution of public transport, rather than a solution of road river crossings.

***Response***

The Silvertown Tunnel will reduce congestion at the existing Blackwall Tunnel by providing an alternative route and helping to redistribute traffic. Overall congestion will reduce and as a result poor air quality associated with congestion will improve. The consultation includes documents setting out predicted traffic flow changes

(<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-traffic-forecasting-report.pdf>) and preliminary emissions information (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-tunnel-enviro-report.pdf>).

The next phase of work will model how the change in emissions will influence localised concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> and how they affect receptors (e.g. homes and schools). This will be reported in the consultation planned for mid 2015.

The Silvertown tunnel will create opportunities for new public transport connections. With substantial planned jobs and population growth north and south of the river, the tunnel will enable new cross-river bus services to link growth areas, and provide new bus connections to major rail interchanges. Frequent congestion at the Blackwall Tunnel and the sub standard height of the n/b tunnel has led to only one single decker bus route across the river in east London. There are many more cross river services in west London where there are a large number of road bridges.

The consultation identifies a number of potential cross-river bus corridors (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-tunnel-transport-assessment.pdf>). TfL will continue to develop proposals for new bus connections in light of responses to the current consultation.

***Local resident and representative from No to Silvertown Tunnel***

Concerns that the proposed user charge will be an unfair tax imposed on east Londoners. Requests instead to extend the congestion charge to fund river crossings.

***Response***

The charges proposed at Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels are necessary to manage traffic and fund the new infrastructure. This new infrastructure will bring considerable benefits to the region and if we want crossings to happen quickly then we need to introduce charges.

There are no current plans to extend the congestion charge.

The consultation includes a paper on charging proposals (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-draft-outline-strategy-for-user-charging.pdf>) and comments are sought.

***Representative from the Freight Transport Association***

Is in support of the proposed tunnel, as public transport is not a viable option for freight. Agrees that the charge will be necessary to manage traffic flow through the two tunnels, though objects to freight and Heavy Goods Vehicles being charged a higher rate.

***Representative from Newham Council***

Is seeking assurance that the proposed Belvedere crossing will not affect or delay the proposed Gallion Bridge.

***Response***

As explained during the presentation it is proposed to progress the development of both the Gallions and Belvedere fixed crossings in parallel. The implications on timetable for delivery will be considered as part of this next stage of work.

***Representative from the John Lewis Partnership***

The changing shopping habits of consumers have resulted in more delivery trucks on the road during peak times, delivering goods and groceries to customers during normal working hours. As the population of east London grows the demand for online deliveries will increase.

***Representative from No to Silvertown Tunnel***

The unique topography of Greenwich results in a higher risk of poor air quality. Questions if the user charge will be cancelled with a change of Mayor, which would incentivise drivers back on the road and lead to a decrease in air quality.

***Response***

The consultation includes a paper on user charging proposals (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-draft-outline-strategy-for-user-charging.pdf>) and comments are sought. TfL will embed any user charge within the scheme proposals that are taken forward through the DCO process.

***John Biggs, Assembly Member***

Concerns that there is no provision for pedestrians or cyclists in Silvertown Tunnel.

***Response***

The Mayor's Transport Strategy supports a package of river crossing improvements in east London, including improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. In support of this and recognising the fact that a 1.4km-long vehicular tunnel would not be an attractive place to walk or cycle through, TfL delivered the Emirates Air Line cable car in 2012, providing a new cross-river link specifically for pedestrians and cyclists, in addition to existing links at Greenwich and Woolwich. Given that the cable car is a much more suitable link, pedestrians and cyclists will not be permitted to use the Silvertown Tunnel, in common with the Blackwall Tunnel

***Representative from the Freight Transport Association***

Questions whether it would be worth having emissions standards on the tunnel.

***Response***

Vehicle emission standards are improving already and the ULEZ will benefit areas in inner and outer London too but the case for a specific emissions standard for traffic using the tunnel will be considered.

The Silvertown Tunnel will reduce congestion at the existing Blackwall Tunnel by providing an alternative route and helping to redistribute traffic. Overall congestion will reduce and as a result poor air quality associated with congestion will improve. The consultation includes preliminary emissions information (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-silvertown-tunnel-enviro-report.pdf>).

The next stage of work will model how the change in emissions will influence localised concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> and how they affect receptors (e.g. homes and schools). This will be reported in the consultation planned for mid 2015.

***Representative from Regeneration and Transport, Greenwich***

Questions the likelihood that one of the proposed bridges will not be constructed due to budget constraints.

***Response***

The Mayor's Transport Strategy confirmed that a package of new crossings is needed to address the issues facing east London, including improved connections for cars, public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and freight.

Elements of the package have already been delivered or are underway including upgrades to existing rail crossings; the construction of Crossrail connecting the Isle of Dogs and Royal Docks with Woolwich and Abbey Wood and the new cable car for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Silvertown Tunnel, together with options for new crossings further east form a package of crossings that are vital to London's continued success.

Recent consultations carried out on the package of crossings have demonstrated a high level of public support. This support is echoed by the Government which has designated the Silvertown Tunnel a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in recognition of its importance for the future development of London.

***Representative from Newham Council***

Concerns about the timing of projects and future changes imposed by politicians.

***Response***

London's population is expected to grow to 10 million by 2031 with much of that growth expected to take place in east London. Unless new river crossings are provided in east London, the overall growth of this part of London will be affected and its economic potential will not be fully realised. The Silvertown Tunnel is a key part of the plans and by delivering a new road link beneath the Thames, Silvertown Tunnel would connect the Greenwich Peninsula with the Royal Docks - two of the Mayor's key Opportunity Areas for thousands of new homes and jobs.

Recent consultations carried out on the proposed crossings have demonstrated a high level of public support. This support is echoed by the Government which has designated the Silvertown Tunnel a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in recognition of its importance to the future development of London.

***Representative from the Federation of Small Businesses***

Concerns about the implications of the proposed user charge on essential micro-businesses serving central London. Concerns that the charge will potentially penalise businesses that make the city function and drive the economy.

***Response***

These new crossings would transform the connectivity of outer east London, open up major sites for development. This will help London's business community by supporting the delivery of jobs and homes across a wide area. They will be essential not just for east London, but for the capital as a whole and will help to ensure that business are able to thrive in the east as well as they do in other areas of the city.

The crossings are supported by a survey of around 700 business respondents.

The consultation includes a paper on user charging proposals (<https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/st-draft-outline-strategy-for-user-charging.pdf>) and comments are sought.

Appendix A – Stakeholder acceptances to the event

<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Company</b>
Jerry Ward	John Lewis Partnership
Tim Martin	London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
Dan Bridge	Greater London Authority (GLA)
John Biggs AM	GLA
Simon Moss	London Borough of Lewisham
Shona Elliott	Newham
Matt Jaffa	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
Glen Richards	London Borough of Redbridge
Stephen Nelson	South East London Chamber of Commerce
Howard Sheppard	Canary Wharf Group
Danny Thorpe	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Christopher Snelling	Freight Transport Association
Patrick Keyes	London Borough of Havering
Jenny Bates	Friends of the Earth
Tim Jackson	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Deirdra Armsby	London borough of Newham
Mark Jenkinson	Siemens, Centre of Competence Cities
Richard Prowse	Tate & Lyle Sugars
Rosie Joseph	Canary Wharf Management Ltd
Ken Wilson	Tate & Lyle Sugars
Osman Dervish	London Borough of Havering
Sam Sims	Centre for London
Mark Henderson	DTZ
Richard Finch	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Merrik Baggallay	Quintain
Matthew Penny Cook	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Kim Smith	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Margaret Cooper	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Liam McKay	London City Airport
Phil Twedde	Canary Wharf Management Ltd
Nikki Coates	No to Silvertown Campaign
Jill Austen	No to Silvertown Campaign
Howard Dawber	Canary Wharf Group
Kat Hanna	London Chamber of Commerce