

Your ref:
Our ref:

Brian Hopkinson
Office of Rail Regulation
1 Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

18th September 2007

Dear Brian,

CROSSRAIL TRACK ACCESS OPTION

In sending you our response to your consultation on the Crossrail track access option, it should be noted that TfL has an interest in this issue as a joint owner, with the DfT, of Cross London Rail Links Ltd (CLRL), which is the company set up to deliver the Crossrail project.

The proposal by the DfT that the Crossrail access option should be effective for a period of 50 years after the date that Crossrail services commence is supported by the economic appraisal for the scheme carried out by CLRL and the prospective duration of the financial instruments that could be used to finance Crossrail. It is understood that further consultations between yourselves and stakeholder consultees are likely to take place following the submission of this application to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the need for contractual certainty for the DfT now and future flexibility in the use of the network.

The modelling work undertaken for the Timetable Reference Group shows that freight and other passenger operators (based on current franchised or approved enhanced services) would not experience any significant reduction in reliability or increased average delays as a result of Crossrail services following implementation of the infrastructure changes now proposed. These changes have mainly been introduced to accommodate the needs of the railfreight sector, as well as the requirements of Crossrail's high capacity service. In parallel with these changes, the recent approval of the Transport Innovation Fund bid for capacity improvements on the Gospel Oak to Barking line will further enhance freight capacity in London and help avoid pathing conflicts on the Crossrail route between Stratford and Forest Gate Junction. In developing the proposals for North Thameside, the freight business is not directly funding any enhancement work but will be significantly increasing the level of traffic on the network.

Any project such as Crossrail must have an agreed scope and budget and a guarantee that the access rights will be available: any provision for future growth would involve projects that would not be subject to approval until after Crossrail has obtained its Powers by Act of Parliament. Approval of the proposed track access option is essential to allow Crossrail to provide the necessary capacity for the operation of the planned level of passenger service, which is needed to support London's role in driving the UK's economic prosperity.

In conclusion, for the reasons set out in the foregoing, TfL supports the proposed Crossrail track access option.

Yours sincerely,

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Copy to: Paul Ross, File