

A BRIEF BRIEFING

FROM THE BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

Thursday, 27th June 2013

1 PRESS RELEASE – Improvements at Barking station

Attached is a press release announcing the agreement reached between National Express's train operating subsidiary, **c2c** and BGORUG for improvements in information provision for passengers using Transport for London's Overground and Underground rail services at the station, as well as those of **c2c**.

2 AT LONG LAST! SPARKS EFFECT FOR BARKING – GOSPEL OAK!

A full press release will be issued in the next few days, but it is still hard to believe that after six years campaigning, during which time it certainly felt at if we were banging our collective head against a brick wall, at least as far as Government were concerned, that the 10-mile 'diesel island' of the Barking – Gospel Oak Line is finally to be integrated with the rest of NE London's electric railway.

- Passengers will benefit from quiet, pollution free electric trains with quicker acceleration and more coaches
- Along with electrification of the Great Western and Midland Lines, already authorised*, it should be possible to progressively change the majority of freight trains crossing North London by either the Barking – Gospel Oak or North London Lines from diesel to electric locomotives over the next 5 years, further reducing noise and pollution. *The West Coast, East Coast and Great Eastern Main Lines are already electrified.

The surprising thing about today's *Investing in Britain's future* announcement by Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander, is that the Government's investment in Barking – Gospel Oak electrification is said to be £115m, way over the £45-50m estimated by the industry and campaigners. BGORUG is seeking to find out just how this £115m was arrived at:

- Is this a fixed sum, or a provisional allocation, subject to revision at the completion of Network Rail's GRIP 3 study?
- Does this global figure include:
 - wiring the connections to the Midland Main Line at Carlton Road?
 - wiring the connections to the East Coast Main Line at Harringay?
 - wiring from Thameshaven Junction into London Gateway?
 - wiring other freight sidings along the Tilbury Line?
- Does this global figure include any funding provision for TfL to source additional electric rolling stock for the Overground service?
- Does this global figure include the £25m already allocated by TfL toward electrification?

BGORUG offers its undying gratitude for all the help and support we have received from MPs Jeremy Corbyn, Stella Creasy and John Cryer and the London Assembly, especially Members Val Shawcross CBE, Caroline Pidgeon MBE, Jennette Arnold OBE,

Joanne McCartney, John Biggs, Andrew Dismore, Roger Evans and Richard Tracey and their staffs. Thank you one and all!

Thanks are also due to our friends in railway industry and industry press, including *Modern Railways* and *RAIL* magazines. Also the *SouthTottenham.org* blog for setting up the e-petition on the Government web site.

Perhaps we can now look forward to a Mayoral visit to the line?

3 DISAPPOINTMENT AT GOSPEL OAK

BGORUG was disappointed to learn that London TravelWatch have decided not to object to London Overground reducing the number of hours that Gospel Oak booking office is open for issuing tickets and dealing with passengers' enquiries.

4 PROGRESS AT SOUTH TOTTENHAM

BGORUG has learnt that Network Rail has applied to Haringey Council for planning permission to erect two lift towers and carry out associated works as part of the Department for Transport (DfT) *Access for All* scheme. BGORUG will be seeking a meeting with London Overground and Transport for London to try and ensure that the works, which will include returning the station entrance to the former booking office, currently in use as a restaurant, will also cater for the increasing numbers of passengers using the station and the longer passenger trains that electrification will bring.

5 NO PROGRESS AT BLACKHORSE ROAD

BGORUG will be seeking an early meeting with London Underground Victoria Line management to find out is happening with several improvements promised for London Overground passengers and the DfT funded *Access for All* works for the London Overground platforms at this station.

6 TICKET GATES FOR LEYTON MIDLAND ROAD

Transport for London (TfL) recently confirmed to BGORUG that they are at the early stages for designing a scheme to install ticket gates at Leyton Midland Road. BGORUG will be seeking to retain the small station entrance in Midland Road which cannot accommodate ticket gates with its current layout.

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