



BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

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LONDON OVERGROUND EXTENSION TO BARKING RIVERSIDE

RESPONSE TO TfL ROUTE OPTIONS CONSULTATION MAY/JUNE 2015

Since the submission of previous comments by the Group, the Chancellor has announced loan funding for the extension and TfL has proceeded to reduce alignment options to two with a view to applying for a Transport & Works Act order to allow construction to begin with a view to completion and opening by 2020.

In summary, BGORUG's views are little changed from those previously submitted, the Group still supports an additional station close by the south side of the existing railway formation for the benefit of nearby residents in the Thames View Estate, Renwick Road and Stern Close areas. Although therefore supporting Alignment B, BGORUG has reservations about the proposed alignment.

I. IS EXTENDING THE BARKING – GOSPEL OAK ROUTE THE BEST SOLUTION?

- 1.1 BGORUG remains of the opinion that the best overall way to serve the residents of Barking Riverside, without the option of the DLR extension to Dagenham Dock, would be by extending the Hammersmith & City Line (H&C) to Barking Riverside over the same route as proposed in Alignment B, or Alignment B(ii) as suggested by BGORUG later in these comments.
- 1.2 There have been spurious arguments advanced as to why the H&C cannot be extended to Barking Riverside, mainly around the different traction power supply systems used by London Underground (LUL) and Network Rail.
- 1.3 As BGORUG pointed out in its previous comments and others responding to this consultation have also pointed out, electric LUL and National Rail passenger services operate in close proximity to each other and over the same tracks in several places in London and an approved new scheme, the 'Croxley Link' will see LUL Metropolitan Line DC 3rd/4th rail trains sharing Watford Junction station with Overground and National Rail DC 3rd rail and AC overhead line trains.
- 1.4 Since the last comments were submitted, c2c have announced that their £5.3m rebuilding of Barking station will commence around the turn of 2015/16. It is essential that the final scheme takes into account the large volume of interchanging passengers between the Barking Riverside Extension (BRE) and c2c and LUL services. BGORUG maintains that the volume of interchanging traffic would be less if the H&C service was to operate the BRE.

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2. IMPACT OF OPERATING THE BRE UPON THE REST OF THE BARKING – GOSPEL OAK SERVICE

- 2.1 By 2020, the Barking – Gospel Oak route will have been electrified and will be operated by 4-car Bombardier *Aventra* 25kvAC Electric Multiple Units (EMUs). The contract for the supply for these trains is about to be signed as these comments are submitted. The base order is for 8x4-car units, which is only sufficient to operate the existing route at the existing frequency, however the contract has a number of options which include additional trains to operate the BRE. In addition, TfL London Rail must have revised its passenger forecasts for the route as another option is additional trains to enable a 5tph frequency (a train every 12 minutes). 6tph operation is planned for 2040. BGORUG fully supports ordering sufficient trains to allow a 5tph peak service by the time the BRE opens to traffic.
- 2.2 Once the BRE is open, with a two platform station at Barking Riverside, the main capacity constraint will be the single platform terminus at Gospel Oak. Currently, this does handle a train every 8/9 minutes in the evening peak for a period of 17 minutes, but it is not thought that this would be sustainable over a longer period and a robust peak operating maximum frequency would probably be every 12 minutes.

3. INTERMEDIATE STATION TO SERVE THAMES VIEW ESTATE & RENWICK ROAD AREA

- 3.1 In the previously submitted comments, BGORUG proposed an intermediate station just east of the A13 Alfred's Way road bridge. This was not favoured by Thames View Estate residents and the staff of the Infants School, who preferred a station further east, between the west end of Wivenhoe Road and Renwick Road. This would preclude c2c services serving the station.
- 3.2 The current Alignment B, proposed by TfL only allows an intermediate station to be located underneath or probably to the immediate west of Renwick Road over bridge. Such a station would have to be served by passenger entrance building on a raft adjacent to the road bridge with stairs/escalators and lift(s) down to the island platform.
- 3.3 This location for a station is not easily accessible for Thames View Estate residents and so given the amount of vacant railway land at the west end of Ripple Lane West Yard, BGORUG would like to suggest an alternative alignment to the south of the existing up (westbound) Tilbury Line.
- 3.4 It should be remembered that Ripple Lane West Yard now only stores unwanted/redundant freight vehicles and provides a location to recess freight trains awaiting a suitable path west via the Barking – Gospel Oak route or Forest Gate Junction and Stratford, or east to Purfleet, London Gateway and Tilbury.
- 3.5 Depending on how much land is available to the south of the railway formation, BGORUG would advocate the slewing of the Up Tilbury and Up Goods Lines to the north and running the up and down BRE lines to the south.
- 3.6 Since the Up and Down Goods Roads were truncated further east from Barking, Tilbury Line Junction East there is vacant land between the formations of the Up & Down Tilbury Lines. This would allow the eastbound (down) BRE line to diverge from the Down Tilbury Line on to the alignment of the old Down & Up Goods Lines. The new Down BRE line would then descend into a flyunder or ascend onto a flyover to cross the Up Tilbury Line and take up an alignment to the south of it. The Up BRE line would then be situated to the south of the Down BRE Line. Both lines would continue east to the south of the Up Tilbury Line through the southernmost arch of Renwick Road over bridge. This would allow a station with either an island or separate up and down platforms, depending on the land

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available, between the west end of Wivenhoe Road and Abridge Way, allowing improved access from Thames View Estate. This proposal [Alignment B(ii)] is illustrated below.

- 3.7 Any encroachment upon Ripple Lane West Yard should not reduce available land for sidings for recessing/stabling freight traffic. It is understood that any further development for rail freight traffic, including to/from HSI will be on the site of the former East Yard partially occupied by the former Freightliner Depot and Traction Maintenance Depot.
- 3.8 It is noted that all that is currently proposed is to make “passive provision” for an intermediate BRE station which would require a separate Transport & Works Act Application at a later date. BGORUG would strongly urge the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to all it can to obtain the necessary funding for this station to be provided as soon as possible.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 BGORUG still believes extending the H&C Line to Barking Riverside would be a better solution to meeting the rail transport needs of the future residents of Barking Riverside.
- 4.2 BGORUG supports the provision of an intermediate station where will BRE diverge from the Tilbury Line. It is said that currently residents of Thames View Estate cannot leave the Estate for work when there is disruption on the A13 in the mornings. A rail station in the vicinity would resolve this problem. Therefore of the two alternative alignments offered by TfL, BGORUG must support Alignment B.
- 4.3 BGORUG urges TfL and London Borough of Barking & Dagenham to give consideration to the suggested Alignment B(ii) (below) which would allow an intermediate station in a location more easily accessible to Thames View Estate residents rather than being on the north end of Renwick Road bridge.

