

Southwark Rail Users' Group

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To: Mayor of London
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10th January 2010

Comments on the Mayor's draft Transport Strategy – Section 5.2.5 Local and orbital rail links and services

The draft says in para 234, section 5.1 on Transport proposals for London's transport network, that in striking the right balance the strategy needs to recognise the varying needs of London ie international, national and local. This comment concerns the local links in our part of London, which is inner south London.

Welcome of orbital ELLX2

Many rail users welcome the now firm plan to build the orbital Overground rail link via the East London Line Extension phase 2, linking Surrey Quays to Clapham Junction through Queens Road, Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill, and mentioned in para 285 section 5.2.5.

We recognise that the Mayor and TfL do not have responsibility for the other radial Overground rail services through this area which are run by the train operating companies under franchise from the Dept for Transport. Nevertheless we think it is important that the Mayor's London transport strategy should indicate the significant role that those radial Overground rail services play in the local transport network for Zone 2 in inner south London.

Vital role of direct radial links

We believe, as TfL know, that the South London Line, which is planned to be cut from 2012, should be maintained as part of this local radial network. However, we are very glad that TfL have acknowledged the importance of the direct Overground rail links into Victoria from this inner south London area, which would be lost from such a cut, and are examining how they can be maintained from 2012.

We consider that all the direct Overground rail links into Blackfriars and London Bridge are also, along with the direct links to Victoria, an essential part of London's local transport network. In effect they fill some of the gaps resulting from the absence of the Tube system in south London. From that perspective, all these radial services play a very vital role in the local inner south London rail network system. This is so even though they, apart from the SLL, are the tail end of longer commuter routes into London.

Omission of radial links in the Transport Strategy needs to be rectified

It seems right therefore that they should be included in the Mayor's transport strategy for the London network if the local level is to be adequately covered, and balanced with the rest.

In any event, with the introduction of TfL's own orbital Overground link in the ELLX2, TfL now is inextricably involved in the planning and operation of Overground rail services in this inner south London area. We suggest that for them not be mentioned at all in the Mayor's transport strategy is a significant omission that needs to be and can simply be rectified in this document.

Suggested amendment

We suggest that a reference be inserted in para 285, section 5.2.5, of the draft after

Work on the London Overground includes reinstatement of disused National Rail routes A further phase now approved will see the completion of the inner London Overground orbital rail network between Surrey Quays and Clapham Junction.

Then an insertion on something like the following lines:

This new link will complement the radial Overground rail services provided by the Train Operating Companies under Department for Transport franchises as part of the National Rail routes. These parts of the radial services come together with the new orbital link to complement each other, and form a vital part of the local rail network system for inner south London. This will require a closer and more strategic working relationship with Network Rail and others in the planning and operating of all the Overground rail services as parts of the local inner south London network.

Amendment will balance the strategy for the Local Network System

Without a reference to the importance of the link between radial and orbital Overground rail services in inner south London, the Transport Strategy will be incomplete and unbalanced in relation to the local level of the inner south London transport network. We trust therefore that you will see the logic for rectifying the omission, and accept the amendment.

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