

Save the South London Line Campaign Update, Feb 2010

The Save the South London Line petition has reached over 4,000 signatures and many more have written to the Mayor, Transport Minister and their MPs and London Assembly Members.

The cross party and cross community group of politicians, local residents, hospitals and businesses met and submitted copies of the petition to Transport for London Chair Mayor Boris Johnson and to Transport Minister Sadiq Khan MP.

There are essentially two key sticking points. One is that London Bridge is to be rebuilt by the Department for Transport and Network Rail and they claim that this will mean in the short term the SLL service can no longer run into London Bridge – they had been suggesting a replacement service running from Victoria to Bellingham. The second big issue is that TfL has plans to withdraw the funding for this very Victoria – Bellingham replacement service before it even begins and spend that money instead on the East London Line (ELL) extension from Surrey Quays to Clapham Junction – a new and useful service but which will go neither to London Bridge or Victoria.

The Minister offered to seek to put a Victoria - Bellingham service back into the ***national*** rail franchise arrangements in 2015 if the Mayor and TfL would take the decision not to withdraw the funding in the short term during the rebuilding of London Bridge station.

Travelwatch, the London passengers' consumer body, carried out a piece of research that supported the campaign's contention that many people will suffer great disadvantage through loss of transport links. The hospitals at Denmark Hill will be particularly affected, as will residents in Clapham and around Camberwell and Peckham.

TfL Review of the decision

The Mayor agreed to carry out a review of the decision and has recognised the need to keep services to central London for current South London Line stations.

TfL has shortlisted a variety of options for keeping services to Victoria, including diverting the new East London Line from Clapham Junction, introducing a Victoria-Bellingham service as previously planned and making current Victoria-Dartford services run all day, guaranteeing for Denmark Hill and Peckham Rye all day trains to Victoria.

Option 1 : A modified East London Line service from Dalston Junction of 4 trains per hour - 2 trains to Clapham Junction and 2 trains to Victoria

Option 2 : A modified East London Line service from Dalston Junction of 6 trains per hour – 4 trains to Clapham Junction and 2 trains to Victoria

Option 3 : A 2 trains per hour service between Victoria and Bellingham

Option 4 : A package of measures: Additional stops in 2 of the 4 existing Orpington – Victoria services at Clapham High Street & Wandsworth Road stations outside of peak times AND additional stops in the 2 trains per hour Gillingham or Dover / Ramsgate services at Peckham Rye & Denmark Hill stations

Option 5 : A package of measures: An additional service of 2 trains per hour between Hither Green and Victoria at peak times AND running of the existing two trains per hour Dartford – Victoria service all day, every day, which would also stop at Clapham High Street & Wandsworth Road stations outside of peak times

However, the issue of restoring the funding which is to be removed by TfL has not been resolved and discussions with TfL about these options are continuing.

What happens next?

The Review will conclude its analysis around mid March and TfL will be presenting its findings to local stakeholders including the Save the South London Line Campaign members in early April. We hope to get a final decision from the DfT and Transport for London soon after this.

We are asking supporters of the South London Line to please write or email the Mayor and Minister for Transport to reiterate to them the importance of the service.

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