



## **DfT Consultation on Safeguarding Revisions for the Chelsea-Hackney Line (Crossrail 2)**

SWELTRAC is a sub-regional transport planning partnership covering ten Boroughs in the south and west London areas. These include the London Boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Merton and Wandsworth and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, all of which are directly affected by these proposals. Each of these authorities will be responding directly to this consultation, but we are also pleased to have the opportunity to offer the views of the SWELTRAC Partnership as a whole.

As a general principle, SWELTRAC welcomes any proposals which will improve public transport provision within the south-west sub-region. London Underground services are much more limited than in many other parts of the capital and car usage in the outer London Boroughs remains at a high level. Orbital bus and train services are limited within the area and there is a great reliance on radial train services into Central London. We have therefore been long term supporters of the basic proposals for the Chelsea-Hackney Line (Crossrail 2).

However, SWELTRAC shares the view of the afore-mentioned London Boroughs that this consultation seems premature. It has been made clear that a major review of the route is proposed to be undertaken within the relatively near future, and this is likely to result in some significant changes to the route and, therefore, the safeguarding that is required.

### **Clapham Junction**

We support the view of the Boroughs concerned that any review of the routing should give serious consideration to the Chelsea and Battersea options, both of which would serve Clapham Junction. This extremely busy station has no Underground link at present, and such a route would be a significant factor in helping to alleviate passenger congestion on the existing lines into Waterloo and Victoria stations. This would, of course, make much of the existing safeguarding on the Fulham route irrelevant and unnecessary.

### **Sloane Square**

We share the view of RB Kensington & Chelsea that it is too early at this stage to dismiss the option of a station at Sloane Square. We do not feel that sufficient justification has been offered for this proposal and are of the view that such a suggestion needs to be more thoroughly tested as part of the full

review of the route. If the current proposal is simply to renew the existing safeguarding arrangements, this appears to be a more major change than is required at this stage.

### **Wimbledon Depot**

We note the proposed change of train-care and stabling arrangements which would see the existing SW Trains depot at Wimbledon be used in future for Crossrail 2 rolling stock. We would be concerned to ensure that this would not have an adverse effect on SWT services, or whoever happens to hold the franchise for passenger services in the south-west London area at that time.

### **Battersea Park**

We are aware of the strong objections of LB Wandsworth to the safeguarding of two areas of Battersea Park for use as a work site and reversing facility. We also believe that such a proposal - over what would be a relatively long period (including restoration and maturity time) - would be unacceptable at a location such as this. Battersea Park is a major amenity in this part of London, not least because of its riverside location. The environment and character of the park would be severely compromised if used for such purposes and many tree specimens would be lost. Moreover, the disruption caused at a popular facility such as this would be likely to cause many of its visitors to decide to travel further afield for their leisure purposes, thus putting an additional strain on the capital's roads and public transport services.

### **Conclusion**

SWELTRAC continues to support the further development of plans for a new Chelsea-Hackney rail service. However, we would urge that a full review of the route be undertaken as soon as possible and that this should look seriously at any options for the inclusion of Clapham Junction on the route. This would then allow for new safeguarding directions to be issued and for any blight and uncertainty to be removed from other parts of the existing proposed route.

*GNF – 12/06/07*