



Ms Sian Berry AM
Chair
Transport Committee
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London, E16 1ZE

Howard Smith
Director, Elizabeth line
Transport for London
Elizabeth line Operations
5 Endeavour Square
London
E20 1JN

2nd August 2022

Dear Sian,

I am writing to you with the latest update on the Crossrail project. My previous letter covered the opening of the Elizabeth line's central section and I am pleased to share with you this month the progress being made on the project as well as some relevant operational updates.

Since opening on 24 May, the Elizabeth line has operated as three separate railways; in the east, west and through central London, at a frequency of 12 trains per hour, across a Monday to Saturday timetable on the central London section. The next stage of the project remains on schedule for this autumn.

This next phase will see the Elizabeth line's east and west sections join up with the central tunnels, connecting Heathrow and Reading in the west with Abbey Wood, and Shenfield in the east with Paddington. This will be of significant value to passengers on some services in and out of central London who will no longer need to change trains when travelling to or from stations in the central section.

At this point, passengers will also benefit from a peak of 22 trains per hour between Paddington and Whitechapel and 16 trains per hour off-peak, as well as the start of Sunday running.

As in recent months, Bond Street station continues to make good progress and it is the only new Elizabeth line station where major work is continuing. The station is expected to be delivered in the autumn, and it will open at the earliest possible time.

The Commissioner continues to personally oversee and drive the project to deliver both of these milestones as soon as possible.

On 26 July, the project's joint sponsors Transport for London and the Department for Transport, together published the Elizabeth line benefits framework. This framework sets out how evidence will be gathered to establish whether the benefits and outcomes of the new railway are as expected. It will also help to ensure that the return on investment is being maximised – and establish lessons for future projects on how to deliver the best value for the local area. We look forward to sharing and discussing the findings with you further.

Safety

Operational safety performance across the Elizabeth line and overall project safety remain good, with all the safety performance indicators currently better than target.

While the type and quantity of work being carried out by Crossrail is changing and reducing, leading to a natural decline in the risk profile of the project, there is absolutely no room for complacency, and safety will continue to be of the highest priority for the full duration of the project.

Focus and challenges

Opening Bond Street station to customers remains a top priority with all efforts focussed on completion later this year.

Good progress is also being made on signalling, with software updates delivering consistent improvements in this area. ELR201 was commissioned following the installation of ELR200 over the Easter blockade, restoring capabilities that had regressed under the ELR200 update. A further signalling software update ELR210 was implemented over the last weekend in July and this will be the final configuration in place for the commencement of through-running services.

Particular attention is being paid to reliability of the transitions – for example, the transition at Stratford between the central and surface sections. This will be key to successfully implementing this next stage.

Another full weekend closure for engineering works in the central section is currently scheduled for 29/30 October.

Delivering full Elizabeth line services

The start date for full Elizabeth line services remains linked to improved reliability growth, and successful commissioning of further upgrades to signalling and rolling stock software.

Delivering the railway in its final configuration will require alignment with National Rail timetable changes, and this means further adjustments to services must be preceded by fixed notice periods. A T-minus process is being established that builds on the approach taken during the countdown to opening the Elizabeth line.

The project remains on track to deliver the Elizabeth line in its final configuration by the end of May 2023.

Operational Performance

Performance on the Elizabeth line, which now includes the Central Operating Section, has been good and this continues to be an important focus for the team. The average Elizabeth line Public Performance Measure (PPM) in Period 3 (29 May – 25 June 2022) across the three sections was 94.9 per cent, above a target of 94 per cent, with the overall Moving Annual Average trend reaching 94 per cent.

Performance on the east and west came in at 93.6 per cent and 93.7 per cent respectively during Period 3. PPM in the central section was 96.8 per cent, now well above the target at opening of 95 per cent.

During the first half of Period 4 (6 June onwards), PPM for the whole of the Elizabeth line was again better-than-target at 95 per cent – which amounted to an industry leading performance for the period.

At Old Oak Common Depot, all trains have been converted to nine-car units with the exception of a final four seven-car units needed to service shorter platforms in Paddington's mainline station.

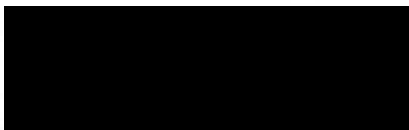
Surface stations

Work towards step-free access and upgraded facilities for Elizabeth line passengers on the surface sections has continued with positive developments for all passengers, but particularly those with reduced mobility.

At Romford, customer lifts allowing step-free access to the Elizabeth line platforms are now open, with the new ticket hall expected to follow in August. At Ilford, work to replace the concrete slab is close to completion, and the target of opening the station by the end of summer remains viable. The station's opening will be a major milestone for the project, as it will mark the provision of step-free access at all stations along the line.

Since the Crossrail project is now in its advanced stages, with the central section open and plans for the next phase of the project well underway, I propose that I next write to you in September of this year, when I will be able to offer further details on the commencement of through running services and progress at Bond Street station.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Howard Smith