



**Executive Member for  
Strategic Planning and  
Transportation**

Members' Room  
Town Hall  
Wandsworth High Street  
London SW18 2PU

Mr John Larkinson,  
Deputy Director,  
Railway Planning and Performance,  
Office of Rail Regulation,  
1 Kemble Street,  
London  
WC2B 4AN

Telephone: 020 8871 6041  
Fax: 020 8871 8611  
Email: [rking@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:rking@wandsworth.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk)

Date: 26th February 2013

Dear Mr Larkinson

**Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan for Control Period 5**

Thank you for your letter of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013, inviting comments on Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan, and for your assistant's agreement to consider this letter after your formal deadline.

Whilst the Council welcomes the commitment in the Business Plan to increasing the capacity of trains into London, we are most concerned and surprised by the absence of any proposal in the Plan to relieve congestion at Clapham Junction Station. A year ago Network Rail was developing a plan for congestion relief in conjunction with Council officers, including a proposal for a new station entrance onto St John's Hill, and we had been led to believe that this plan would be implemented as a priority in Control Period 5.

The Business Plan certainly recognises the problems of congestion at Clapham Junction, as it states that it and Wimbledon Station "*suffer with severe congestion and high levels of interchanging passengers. These stations are congested today so require significant investment to deal with the current level of passengers as well as allowing for future growth*". In view of this, it seems to be illogical that the Plan contains no proposals to deal with this increasing problem.

I am sure you will recall Lord Adonis's "Better Rail Stations" report in 2009, which described Clapham Junction as the second worst interchange in the country, and which included a mystery shopper survey showing Clapham Junction scoring only a 39% level of satisfaction compared to the recommended target of 80%, and minimum threshold of 70% for major interchange stations. Since then station usage has increased. I believe that passenger growth is generally around 7 or 8% per annum over the South West Trains network, but here at Clapham Junction there has been a surge in use with the opening of a new platform for the extension of the East London Line in December 2012. Further high growth is expected as suburban trains are lengthened from 8 to 10 cars in the next couple of years. In addition, some West London Line services into

Clapham Junction are being lengthened from 4 to 8 cars, and from 4 to 5 cars on London Overground services. With all these welcomed improvements being made to train capacity, Network Rail needs to follow suit by increasing the capacity of Clapham Junction station to cater for these additional passengers.

You may not be aware that at the very busiest times the station operator has introduced restrictions on pedestrian flows on the stairways, the subway, and footbridge due to safety concerns, and these restrictions cause great inconvenience and frustration to the travelling public due to additional walking distances and delays due to queuing, which can cause trains to be missed. This should not be allowed to continue at Britain's busiest railway station.

We would, therefore, be grateful if you would ensure that the Business Plan is amended to include the plans to increase capacity and relieve congestion at Clapham Junction.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. King', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Councillor Russell King  
Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transportation