



The voice of transport users

# Response to TfL's consultation on the potential extension of the Bakerloo line further into South East London

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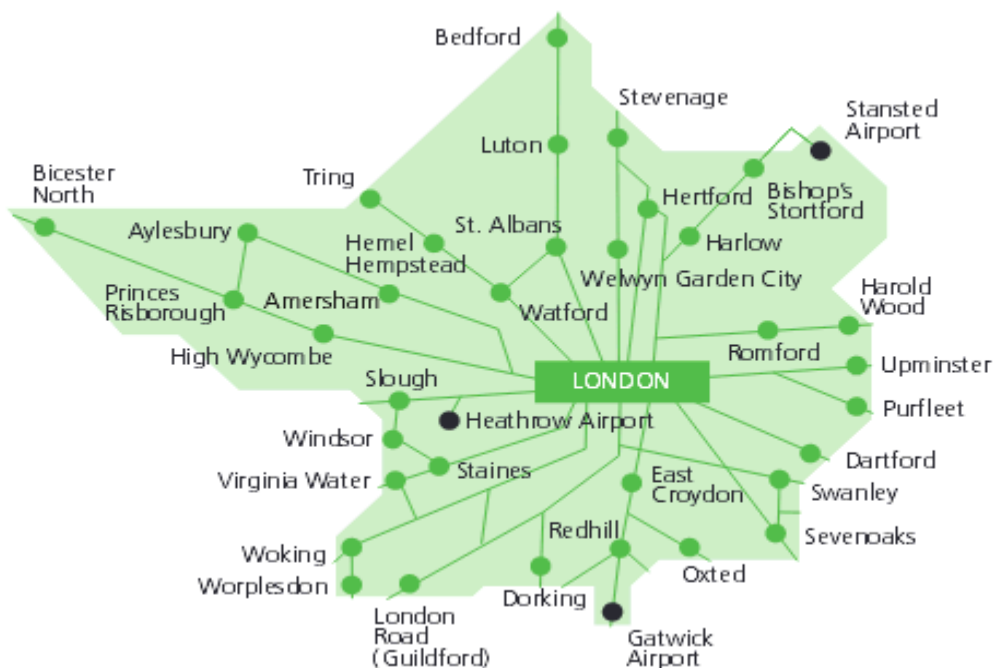
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**London TravelWatch** is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London’s travelling public, including the users of all forms of public transport. We are supported by and accountable to the London Assembly.

### Our approach

- We commission and carry out research, and evaluate and interpret the research carried out by others, to ensure that decisions on transport policy and operations are based on the best possible evidence
- We investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers – we get more than 6,000 enquiries a year from transport users and in 2013-14 we took 1,100 cases up with the transport operator because we agreed that the response the complainant had received to their original complaint was not satisfactory
- We monitor trends in service quality as part of our intelligence-led approach
- We regularly meet and seek to influence the relevant parts of the transport industry on all issues which affect the travelling public and work closely with a wide range of public interest organisations, user groups and research bodies to ensure we remain aware of their experiences and concerns
- We speak for passengers and the travelling public in discussions with opinion formers and decision makers at all levels, including the Mayor of London, the London Assembly, the Government, Parliament and local councils.

Our experience of using London’s extensive public transport network, paying for our own travel, and seeing for ourselves what transport users go through, helps ensure we remain connected and up to date. Our aim is to press in all that we do for a better travel experience for all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.



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## Introduction and recommendations

The potential extension of the Bakerloo line further into South East London is a project of equal importance to schemes such as Thameslink, Crossrail, Crossrail 2 and HS2 in improving the journey experiences of passengers in London and beyond. It offers the prospect of:-

- significantly better connectivity to a part of London that has notoriously low levels of public transport accessibility. Combined with the proposals for Crossrail 2 it would create a 'Union Jack' network for the whole of the London area
- better use of the existing infrastructure in the area, both on National Rail and London Underground
- reducing the area's reliance on the road network. This could mean less congestion for road users and bus passengers, and a more resilient network at times of disruption
- Enabling regeneration along the line of the route that could contribute towards the cost of the extension.

London TravelWatch therefore:

- Supports the concept of an extension of the Bakerloo line into South East London
- Has no preference for either options 1a or 1b
- Believes that a separate project to reopen Camberwell station on the Thameslink route should be pursued regardless of any decision to extend the Bakerloo line
- Supports the conversion of the Hayes branch to Bakerloo operation subject to the provision of seamless interchanges at Lewisham and New Cross Gate, and the upgrading of the interchange routes between the Bakerloo, Northern and Thameslink lines at Elephant & Castle
- Supports an extension to Bromley town centre, provided that this is combined with or has passive provision for joint use with any future 'R25' rail project. Further combination with the R25 project could allow Bakerloo line services proposed to terminate at Lewisham to be extended to serve Catford, Birkbeck, South Norwood / Norwood Junction and West Croydon
- Advocates the inclusion of the Grove Park – Bromley North branch in any extended Bakerloo line service to Bromley

- Welcomes the opportunities for improvements to other Southeastern services in South East London and Kent, in terms of frequency, capacity and journey time that a takeover of the Hayes line by the Bakerloo would enable
- Advocates that TfL study how to increase passenger capacity at Piccadilly and Oxford Circus stations
- Advocates additional infrastructure investment in South East London as outlined in paragraph 4.10 in advance of any extension of the Bakerloo line. This should include the development of a 'South London Metro' on Network Rail lines with train frequencies similar to that provided on London Underground.

## 1 The impact on passengers

- 1.1 The proposals would result in a significant increase in public transport capacity in South East London, both from the extension of the Bakerloo line and the ability to reuse rail and bus capacity released on other routes. In addition, substantive future proofing of the scheme would allow easier and cheaper delivery of other schemes that the Mayor is proposing under the 2050 Infrastructure Plan, such as the R25 orbital rail network.

### 1.2 Elephant & Castle to New Cross Gate

The two options put forward both have merits.

Option 1a (Old Kent Road) provides new stations in areas that are not served by rail and are highly dependant on buses and a heavily congested road network. It would also serve an area earmarked for development opportunities. An extension would enable through rail journeys by passengers who currently have to take a bus to Elephant & Castle station.

Option 1b (Camberwell and Peckham Rye) provides a new station at Camberwell and an interchange at Peckham Rye with Southern, Thameslink and London Overground services. It would release bus capacity on the Walworth Road corridor to Elephant & Castle. However, it would make the route into South East London longer and slightly more circuitous. Links from Peckham Rye to other centres in the area such as Lewisham, Catford and Bromley are provided now, and also have the opportunity for further expansion as an alternative to a Bakerloo line station. Similarly demand from Camberwell could be accommodated by reopening the station on the Thameslink route.

A consequence of either option would be that demand for interchange between the Bakerloo line and the Northern line, and also the Thameslink route at Elephant & Castle station would substantially increase, even though local demand for interchange with buses would likely reduce. However, at present this can be a very difficult interchange with limited capacity at peak times, and so improving this should be a priority.

### 1.3 New Cross Gate to Lewisham

The main benefit on this section of route would be the increase in capacity and frequency on routes into central London, both toward Charing Cross and Waterloo provided by the Bakerloo line (replacing three peak and two off-peak trains per hour of five to ten cars with up to 27 trains per hour of seven car length) and toward London Bridge and Cannon Street provided by replacing the Hayes route trains toward central London with other services from the North Kent or Chislehurst routes. Some of this capacity would still be needed to accommodate

passengers travelling from the Hayes line to London Bridge and Cannon Street.

Other benefits would include the ability for Hayes line passengers to interchange at New Cross Gate with London Overground East London Line services, which would be of greater frequency than those provided at New Cross at present, and with Southern services towards Forest Hill, Sydenham, East Croydon and Gatwick Airport.

#### 1.4 Lewisham to Hayes

The main benefit on this section of route would be the increase in capacity and frequency on routes into central London. However, this would mean losing direct services from this route to London Bridge and Cannon Street. This would result in longer journey times if average waiting times at stations are excluded from any calculation of benefit. In contrast however, taking into account the increased frequency of trains, passengers' overall journey times would decline because waiting time would be reduced. For passengers travelling to parts of Docklands and Canary Wharf this would be a greater benefit as only half of the current service calls at Lewisham and New Cross for interchange with the DLR and the East London Line.

Other benefits would include relieving crowding on the Thameslink Catford loop service by providing an alternative link between Catford and Elephant & Castle, also freeing up capacity for a new Camberwell station; relief to parallel bus routes such as route 54 between Elmers End and Lewisham; and to rail services from East Croydon and Norwood Junction to central London by the connection with Tramlink at Elmers End and Clock House / Beckenham Road (currently many passengers would use Tramlink in the opposite direction towards East and West Croydon stations to make this journey).





London TravelWatch notes that there is substantive concern about the loss of direct services from the Hayes route to London Bridge and Cannon Street on the basis of the need to interchange at either Lewisham or New Cross Gate (London Bridge only). Therefore any scheme must ensure that the interchange arrangements at both these stations must be as seamless and short in distance between platforms as possible. This would require substantive remodelling of Lewisham station.

## 1.5 Beckenham Junction

At present there is a connecting line from the Hayes line at New Beckenham to Beckenham Junction on the Southeastern 'Chatham' main line between Victoria, Bromley South and beyond into Kent. The station is also served by a Southern service from London Bridge via Peckham Rye and London Bridge, and by Tramlink. The connecting line currently is only used by a handful of trains per day, usually in connection with the movement of otherwise empty stock before and after the peak. From time to time the connecting line is also used as a diversionary route during engineering works on Southeastern's main line routes through Bromley, Catford or Orpington. The connecting line also has sidings which are used for the storage of trains (often from routes other than the Hayes route) between the peaks. These sidings would need to be provided somewhere else if the Bakerloo line extension were to go ahead.

The Bakerloo line proposal envisages that the connecting line would be used on a more regular basis with up to six trains per hour.

Beckenham Junction station is the most centrally located station within this district centre, and use of it by the Bakerloo line would be substantially beneficial in terms of access to the town centre and allow interchange with the Southeastern, Southern, Tramlink and bus services that call there.

## 1.6 Beckenham Junction to Bromley

A further proposal would involve taking the Bakerloo line in tunnel from the New Beckenham to Beckenham Junction connecting line, to Bromley town centre. In previous public discussions (the 2050 Infrastructure Plan consultation) it has been proposed that this tunnelled line should continue to Sundridge Park with new underground stations at Beckenham Junction, Shortlands and Bromley North (central) where the Bakerloo line would take over the Bromley North – Grove Park branch line to Grove Park.

Extending to Bromley would have some major advantages given the importance of this large town centre. However, more passenger benefits would arise if the Bakerloo took over the Bromley North branch from Grove Park. This currently operates as a shuttle service with no direct

services toward London, and proportionate to its length is an inefficient user of the resources required to run it. The current Bromley North station could be redeveloped or used for storage sidings for the extra trains that would be needed for the extension.

Serving Bromley would also increase the connectivity between Bromley, Catford and Lewisham district centres which are currently dependant on bus services (208, 261, 320, 336) or by rail interchange at Grove Park or Catford / Catford Bridge.

North of Grove Park there are also sidings which could be used for the Bakerloo line. This area is also remote from the rail network and so there is potential to locate a terminus station at this point as an alternative to Grove Park.

This proposal duplicates one by the Mayor for an outer London orbital rail (full size as opposed to tube) service in the 2050 Infrastructure plan. This would involve the Grove Park – Bromley North service being provided as part of a 'R25' with trains running to and from the Sidcup line via the Lee Curve to Grove Park, on to Sundridge Park, in a tunnelled railway via Bromley North, Shortlands to Beckenham Junction, and then via the current Southern rail route through Birkbeck, but diverting to Norwood Junction and West Croydon.

This is not necessarily in conflict with the Bakerloo line extension, and given that the Bakerloo line proposed level of service is six trains per hour, it would be perfectly feasible for the two to coexist and together they would be complimentary. It is recommended therefore that if the Bromley option is chosen that London TravelWatch should advocate that this section of route is combined with the R25 proposal and built to Network Rail standards as opposed to that of a tube line. This should not be problematic as the Bakerloo line uses Network Rail tracks between Queens Park and Harrow & Wealdstone.

### **1.7 Reuse of Southeastern capacity released by the conversion of the Hayes branch to Bakerloo line use.**

The current Hayes line service offers a standard pattern of five to six trains per hour in the peak and four in the off-peak between Ladywell and London Bridge, with approximately half serving Charing Cross / Waterloo East and half Cannon Street.



These timetable slots need to be reused to maintain capacity and frequency between Lewisham, New Cross and central London. However they also offer the opportunity to improve the frequency of other services, and to reduce journey times for longer distance services from parts of Kent.

These could include the following:

- Reinstatement of a direct peak hour link between Lewisham, Blackheath and stations on the Woolwich Arsenal line withdrawn in 2009
- Provision of a fast direct service from the Maidstone East line to London Bridge and Cannon Street. This would reduce journey times from Otford, Swanley and St Mary Cray to the City by around 30 minutes over current journey times. This is a long term aspiration of Kent County Council. St Mary Cray is an outer London area that suffers high levels of deprivation, and providing a fast direct link to expected areas of employment growth would be a major benefit
- Replacement of local Thameslink service between St Mary Cray and Sevenoaks with a more direct service to central London via Chislehurst. The Thameslink service could then be diverted to Petts Wood and Orpington. This would have substantive journey time benefits and would also increase rail connectivity for local journeys within South East London
- Increasing the frequency of local services on the Sidcup, Bexleyheath or Chislehurst lines which have crowding issues at peak times

- Reduced journey times for long distance services from Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and beyond arising from the lack of conflicts at junctions between Ladywell, Hither Green and New Cross.

A further benefit is the potential reduction in crowding on parallel lines with services provided by Southern and London Overground. Between Elmers End and New Cross, Hayes branch services are within two to three miles of the Anerley to New Cross Gate route via Sydenham and Forest Hill. However, the higher frequency of this route with Southern and London Overground services means that passengers who live closer to Hayes branch stations will use these services in preference to their geographically closer station. A Bakerloo line service of 15 to 21 trains per hour would redress this balance and therefore there is likely to be crowding benefit on the Sydenham route.

### 1.8 Effects on other parts of the Bakerloo line

The Bakerloo line is currently planned to be the last line to receive a major upgrade in terms of new trains and signalling. As such it would be more cost effective to consider doing this upgrade at the same time as any extension to ensure compatibility of rolling stock and infrastructure.

Any extension into South East London would by its very nature mean stimulation of growth of through journeys between the current Bakerloo line and the extended line; journeys that are either not taken at the moment or are done by car because the interchange requirements are considered too onerous. In addition some journeys where currently passengers alight at Charing Cross and walk to their destination in the West End would likely result in passengers continuing or starting their journey at existing high volume stations such as Piccadilly Circus and Oxford Circus. It is recommended therefore that London TravelWatch ask TfL to consider how passenger capacity at these stations could be increased.

### 1.9 Proposal to terminate some services at Lewisham or terminate the extension at Lewisham

The consultation suggests that consideration might be given to an extension only as far as Lewisham, and that some services on an extended line might terminate at Lewisham.

This option does have some merits in that the benefits to inner London passengers would be delivered, and there would be no cost of conversion of the Hayes branch. Passengers from this line would also retain their direct services to Charing Cross and Cannon Street. However, this would mean the inner London sections would need to bear the full costs of the extension, but without delivering the substantial additional benefits that would flow for other passengers in the South East London and Kent areas, that a takeover of the Hayes line would enable. As outlined above, these benefits are likely to be very

substantial. London TravelWatch does not therefore support an option which would only extend the Bakerloo line to Lewisham.

The consultation suggests that even if the Bakerloo line were extended to the Hayes branch, six trains per hour would still terminate at Lewisham. However, if there is a proposal for an 'R25' that would takeover most of the Beckenham Junction – Birkbeck – Crystal Palace route, this if combined with the Bakerloo line could enable these Lewisham trains to continue beyond Lewisham via Catford to New Beckenham and then join the 'R25' route near Cator Park to serve Birkbeck, Norwood Junction and West Croydon (for Croydon Town Centre). This would provide a direct link between the town centres of Croydon, South Norwood, Catford and Lewisham.

## 2 Other requirements for transport investment in South East London

- 2.1 The TfL consultation asks for suggestions as to other improvements to transport infrastructure in the area. Any extension of the Bakerloo line will require some disruption to train services during its construction. The Hayes branch stations are almost all fully step free, which is not the case on other parallel lines that passengers might be expected to use during any construction period.
- 2.2 In previous work London TravelWatch has highlighted the need to improve station to station interchange walking routes at Catford Bridge (to Catford) and at Clock House (to Kent House and Beckenham Road tram stop). At Catford/Catford Bridge there is the potential to integrate the two side by side stations, and at Clock House/Kent House interchange whilst feasible, signed and often advised by journey planners is let down by poor lighting and unmade surface of part of the route – Plawfield and Barnmead Roads at Kent House station are unadopted. It is recommended that these interchanges are improved in advance of any conversion of the Bakerloo line to provide potential alternative routes during a closure period.
- 2.3 London TravelWatch recommends therefore that TfL should work with Network Rail and National Rail operators to develop a programme of access improvements at stations such as Penge West (southbound platform), Norwood Junction, Bellingham, Ravensbourne (northbound platform) and Catford to provide step-free access prior to any closure of the Hayes branch to facilitate conversion to the Bakerloo line.
- 2.4 Lewisham station is an extremely complex interchange, with some very long walking routes from areas that form its principle catchment area. In particular, in recent years there has been a loss of direct walking routes from the north and east of the station as a result of Southeastern gating the main part of the station. It is recommended that London TravelWatch's previous request for a new entrance from this area (car park owned by Tesco) should be pursued again as part of any Bakerloo line extension.
- 2.5 Brockley station on the Sydenham route is crossed on a bridge by the Lewisham-Nunhead rail route but with no platforms. This is served by trains running between Victoria and Dartford. London TravelWatch has had a long term aspiration to provide platforms on this route. This would make the station an interchange, but would also provide an alternative route for local passengers travelling to the West End from the area served by stations at St John's, Lewisham, Ladywell and Crofton Park. It is recommended that this included as a potential scheme.

## 2.6 Improving the frequency of trains on the Catford loop line

2.7 This route is now operated by Thameslink, but the frequency of trains is, for an inner London route, very poor, with only two trains per hour off-peak and four per hour at maximum in the peak. It has been a long-term aspiration of London TravelWatch, local authorities and local user groups to improve this, and in particular to provide a direct service to the West End (Victoria) rather than just the City (Blackfriars) as is provided at the moment. This route's stations (Beckenham Hill, Bellingham, Catford and Crofton Park) share common catchment areas with the Hayes branch (Lower Sydenham, Catford Bridge and Ladywell), and so providing a service on this route to the West End during any conversion process for the Bakerloo line should be considered essential.

2.8 Most London Underground end-of-line stations (e.g. Cockfosters, Epping, High Barnet etc) have substantial car parking attached to them as the high service frequency encourages rail heading by passengers coming from further afield. A train frequency of 15 per hour is likely to attract some passengers from New Addington, Biggin Hill, east Surrey and Kent to use Hayes and West Wickham stations as similar railheads. Both these stations currently have modestly sized car parks that are appropriate to the current train services, it would be prudent to consider expansion of these to accommodate potential growth and reduce the potential impact on local communities.

## 2.9 Equalities and inclusion implications

2.10 Extension of the Bakerloo line presents significant opportunities to address equality and inclusion issues, serving areas of high deprivation and poor transport accessibility.

2.11 The Hayes branch of Southeastern is unusual in that all stations except for Clock House (northbound platform) and Eden Park (southbound platform), (pictured right) are fully step free to the platform. Any conversion to Bakerloo operation should ensure that this is maintained and that schemes should be devised to make Clock House (northbound platform) and Eden Park (southbound platform) stations fully step free. During the conversion period appropriate accessible services must be provided.



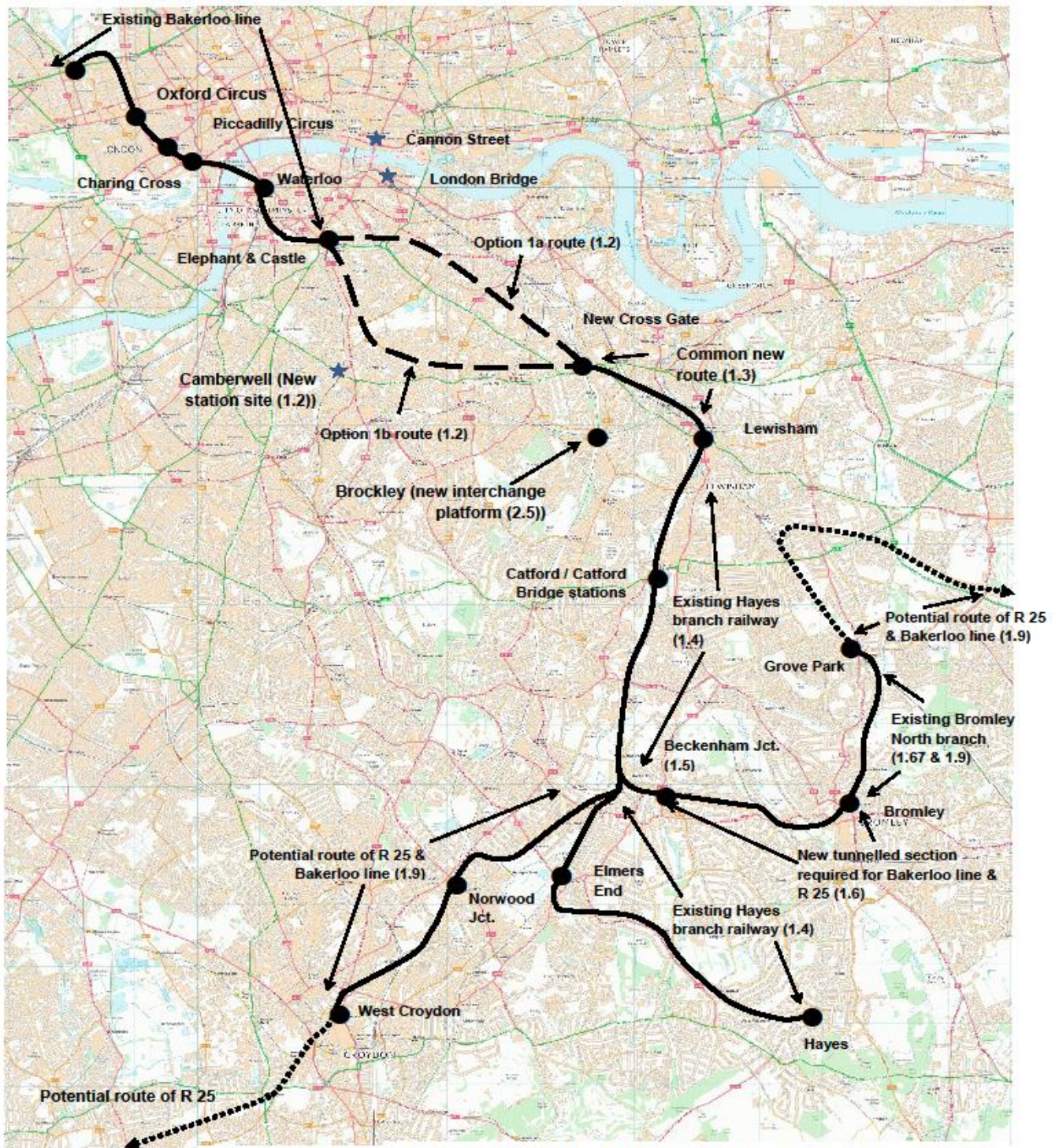
## Conclusions

The extension of the Bakerloo line further into South East London provides a once in a generation opportunity for a transformation of the accessibility of this area, and beyond by public transport. Passengers would benefit more frequent services both on the line of the route and across a wider area as a result of the 'untangling' of services on the Southeastern network of National Rail.



# Appendix 1: Bakerloo line extension schematic map

Bakerloo line extension schematic map



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R 25 – proposed outer orbital railway

Figures in brackets refer to paragraphs in report

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