

EAST LONDON LINE POST-CLOSURE NOTES – 7

by John Thomason

with contributions from londonreconnections blogspot and anonymous

East London Line News issue 4 was first seen in early October. Although reputedly distributed to local residents, three [LURS] members in the catchment area have yet to receive a copy of any issue through their letterbox! Your reporter has picked his copies up from such sources as the local shopping centre, blowing around the street and personal visit to the project office. Matters covered in issue 4 include recruitment, community and environmental issues as well as project update reports of more interest to *Underground News* readers. We are informed that deep cleaning and electrical refurbishment at Shadwell and Wapping is progressing. We are also updated regarding civil engineering works and the installation of secondary means of escape at Shadwell and Surrey Quays and work on shafts at Wapping.

Slab-track laying is progressing well with some interesting underground track-level images appearing on the Londonreconnections blogspot for 24 October – there were also some informative street level pictures from the Shoreditch area for 28 October.

Concrete pumping for slab track had started at Rotherhithe by mid-October – access was from Albion Street to the south end of Rotherhithe station.

At the TfL Board meeting on 5 November, Peter Hendy reported that the East London Extension Phase One Project remained on schedule for delivery in June 2010. Twelve implementation milestones had been agreed with the main works contractor, Balfour Beatty-Carillion Joint Venture for the period September to December 2008. New Cross Gate Flyover was now ready for ballasted track laying and comments had been received for eight design packages in preparation for their inclusion in the project's technical case. Track laying was near complete on the Kingsland Viaduct and the construction of reinforced concrete track was underway north of Haggerston station. The Operational Building Complex, housing the planned signalling and drivers' centre, was structurally complete and building services installation was progressing. The Rolling Stock Maintenance Facility core structure had now been completed. An Invitation to Tender for the Infrastructure Manager Contract had been issued to four prospective bidders, with responses due in December 2008 and appointment scheduled for the end of February 2009. As to East London Extension Phase Two, discussions are underway with the DfT regarding funding options for the proposed extension to Clapham Junction. A resolution is required shortly to ensure delivery before the commencement of Thameslink works at London Bridge and before the run up to the Olympics and Paralympics in 2012.

The campaigning website www.eastlondonline.org.uk is now advising Wapping residents to give up and move! They seem to have abandoned their crusade for direct bus links from Wapping to various destinations. I am surprised that walking to the DLR at Shadwell is not considered to be a viable alternative.

In mid-November it was noted that the Trundleys Road footbridge had been removed and hoardings erected – it is unlikely that the replacement will offer photographic opportunities.

Also in mid-November work started to construct a worksite around one of the two tunnel ventilation shafts in Surrey Quays Shopping Centre car park to enable concrete pumping to commence a few days later.

In early December the DfT published *The Invitation to Tender for South Central*, which contains some material of relevance. Bidders should assume that the East London Line becomes operational south of New Cross Gate from the timetable change date in May 2010. [There remains some confusion as to the future name, East London Line or East London Railway]. Initial indications from TfL are that the route between New Cross Gate, Shoreditch High Street and locations further north may open earlier. A further link to the North London Line is due to open in early 2011 but the exact service pattern and opening date is not yet known. Services will operate between West Croydon and Crystal Palace to New Cross Gate, Surrey Quays, Shoreditch High Street and other stations to the north. A service frequency of 4 tph from each of Crystal Palace and West Croydon will operate Monday – Sunday for around 17 hours per day although some changes to service frequency and pattern is expected on Sunday mornings. Some additional services are planned from Crystal Palace in the peaks. Bidders should assume these additional services commence in May 2011 at the earliest. In addition, the stations that will pass to Overground management are confirmed as: New Cross Gate, Brockley, Honor Oak Park, Forest Hill, Sydenham, Crystal Palace, Penge West, Anerley, Norwood Junction & West Croydon. If funding for ELL Phase 2b is secured, then the South London Line will cease to operate from approximately December 2011 and the following additional stations will also transfer: Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye, Clapham High Street & Wandsworth Road.

The December 2008 issue of *GLIAS Newsletter* gives some interesting information relating to the shaft above the Thames Tunnel, to be used as an extension to the Brunel Museum. The reinforced concrete slab floor has a designed load of 20kN/m² and weighs 120 tonnes. The slab is 11 metres from the top of the shaft and 7.5 metres below ground level. The design of the newly extended museum space incorporates two-hour structural fire resistance. Following completion of the concrete curing period, redundant steelwork associated with the wartime floodgates will be removed.

At the December 2008 TfL Board Meeting it was reported that the Mayor's priorities are: Major investment on national rail in London and the South East on more and longer trains, longer platforms, better signalling and major projects like Thameslink; Working towards Tube-level frequencies, staffing and policing for every suburban London station; Ensuring that Oyster is accepted everywhere; Building Crossrail to link east and west; Funding and building East London Line Phase 2b to Clapham Junction. It was unclear if this wish list is ranked or random.



Left: Construction of the East London Line extension proceeds. On 16 September 2008 the superstructure of Shoreditch High Street station was well in evidence alongside Bethnal Green Road. The concrete boxing in of the line is being taken as far as the bow-string bridge over Shoreditch High Street to acoustically isolate the line from future building developments.

Photo: Alan Blake



Above: On 16 September 2008 also, the ramp at the eastern end of the girder bridge over the Liverpool Street main lines was under construction (*left*). This, together with a the slope of the girder bridge itself, forms the upper part of the incline from the original ELL alignment under Vallance Road to the new alignment to cross over Brick Lane. The viaduct over Brick Lane is seen under construction (*right*) on the 15 October 2008 looking north with the west end of the girder bridge at the right. **Both photos:**