

Response to the Infrastructure Commission Call for Evidence October 2015

Streatham Action is a voluntary, non-political group in Streatham informally elected at a public AGM to campaign for improvements to life in Streatham, and sanctioned by, though independent of Lambeth Council. Specialist sub-groups were created in 2015 to deal with subjects that are of the greatest concern to residents, namely Transport and Planning. www.streathamaction.org.uk.

The Streatham Action Transport Group is delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the Infrastructure Commission's Call for Evidence and interest in fresh and innovative perspectives. Our area of interest in this consultation is London's transport system, in particular strategic options for future investment in large-scale transport improvements on road, rail and underground - specifically Crossrail 2 - and the consequences for Streatham and the A23 corridor and future connectivity.

Streatham Action recommends that the Crossrail 2 route map, as it currently stands in the SW London area, be adjusted to one that would omit Balham as a CR2 station, but instead run from Clapham Junction through a new CR2 station at Streatham - which would provide a Southern Rail interchange required in SW London - and on to a reinstated CR2 station approaching from a south-easterly direction at Tooting Broadway. This would provide the vital interchange in SW London with the Northern line.

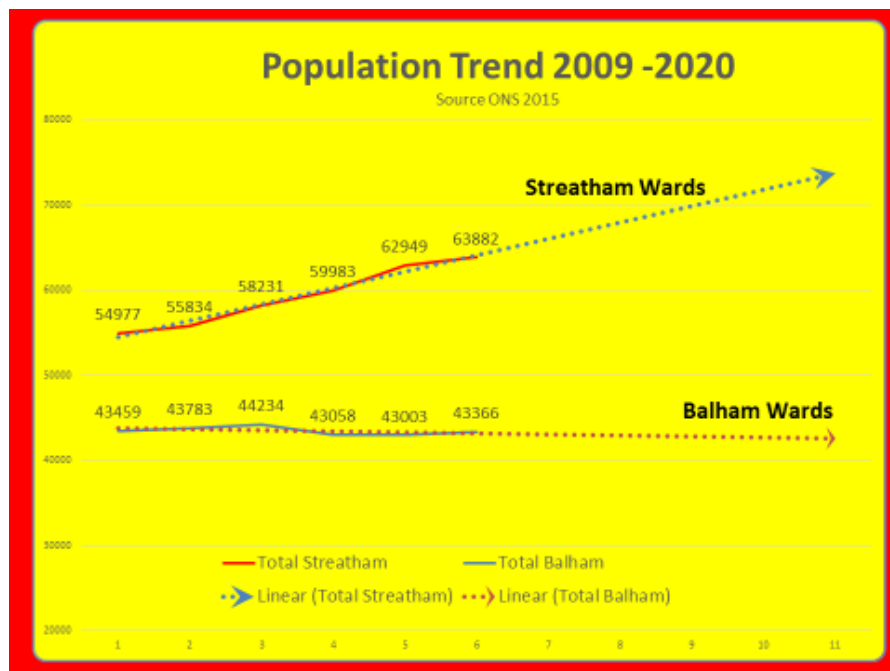
Our group does not have access to all statistics and modelling from TfL, Network Rail or local or national government bodies. However, it seeks to

- Highlight areas in which we believe review and supplementation of work undertaken to date by the GLA and TfL are necessary in order to enable prioritising of the strategic transport challenges faced over the next 20-30 years that may constrain economic growth in the key corridor approaches to London.
- Provide evidence that further investigation of the needs and potential of our geographical area of interest is necessary before priority outcomes for London's future transport infrastructure choices are decided upon, with particular reference to capacity, reliability, journey times, and connectivity
- Highlight that the lack of investment in transport infrastructure in Streatham and the A23 corridor is a gap that continues to lead to failure to tackle existing and prepare for future challenges in order to target desirable outcomes.
- Consider that Crossrail 2 is the only major future transport infrastructure project within 20-30 years that could address the critical transport situation in Streatham, and also has the capacity positively to impact road, rail and underground outcomes in the area and for connectivity London and the south east as a whole.
- Submit that, although already sharing the burden of cost for funding and financing Crossrail1, the Overground, the Northern Line extension, the Bakerloo line extension etc. through Council Tax precepts, residents of Streatham and its hinterland are not benefitting equitably from the benefits of such investment.
- Show that Streatham and the surrounding area has the capacity for economic regeneration in the form of employment, greater productivity, and affordable housing if provided with the necessary transport capacity.

Major economic and social challenges facing London and its commuter hinterland over the next two to three decades

Population growth, with resulting pressures on transport, health, education, and other social infrastructures, as well housing availability and affordability that is driving younger people towards outer areas will continue to put pressure on London and its hinterland.

Our focus is on the key south London corridor with particular reference to Streatham, which has undergone massive and unpredicted population growth of 28% over the last 10 years (ONS 2015). Significantly, since Crossrail 2 considered Streatham as part of any route option around 2011, using data Streatham Action estimates to be from 2009-10 or earlier, population across its four wards has increased on average 16% since then, and the upward trend is projected to continue.



This rate of population growth (16%) is in contrast to that of Balham, which has seen a slight population decline over the same period, but is currently part of Crossrail2's proposed route through south west London. Streatham's growth also outpaces the 9% predicted for Lambeth and 10% for London as a whole over the next 10 years (Lambeth Demography 2015).

Population growth in Streatham has led to a dramatic increase in the demand for public transport, among other infrastructure services, which is evident and manifest in a surge in station usage at all 3 Streatham stations – over 58% since 2009-10 at Streatham station, for example. There has been an increase in footfall at Streatham stations between 2013-14 and 2014-15 alone of 574,868, according to Office of Rail Regulation Entry and Exit Data. Logic dictates that this surge is likely to be a major factor in loading the Northern Line at Balham.

Since 2009-10, when we believe Crossrail2 last considered any option including Streatham, there has been a staggering 92.8% (4,818,096) increase in entries and exits across all Streatham's railway station. See chart below.

The impact of this is plain to see at peak hours with overcrowded trains already at full capacity, and there are no plans whatever in prospect for transport infrastructure improvement for at least another generation. Significantly, for the time period Crossrail2 were most likely using in the assessment of the two options including Streatham, passenger numbers at its stations were declining, thus projections in their modelling may have extrapolated the trend, with inevitable consequences that ruled Streatham out. Streatham Action believes these facts alone demand further investigation by TfL and the GLA into the case for Streatham to be included in Crossrail2.

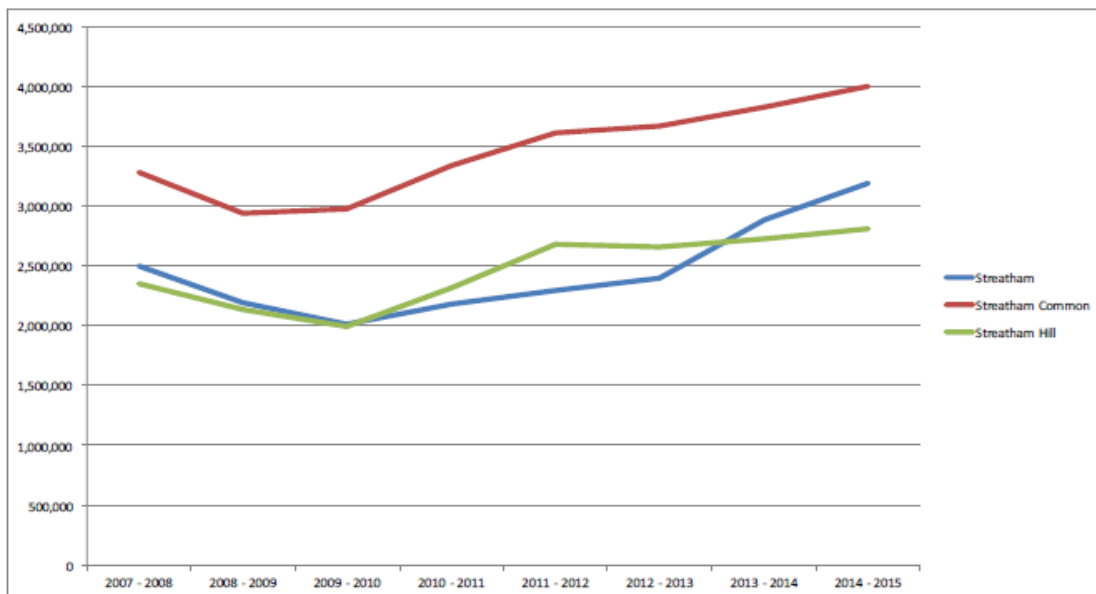
Office of Rail Regulation Entry & Exit Data 2006 – 2015

Office of Rail Regulation Entry & Exit Data 2006 - 2014

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	Increase on 13/14
Streatham	1,723,835	2,501,022	2,192,570	2,015,864	2,179,456	2,301,700	2,396,904	2,883,734	3,194,098	310,364
Streatham Common	2,994,714	3,282,824	2,942,892	2,977,568	3,346,078	3,612,564	3,668,806	3,827,296	4,003,938	176,642
Streatham Hill	2,004,200	2,355,874	2,137,376	1,996,690	2,322,980	2,684,506	2,661,068	2,725,320	2,813,182	87,862
TOTAL									10,011,218	

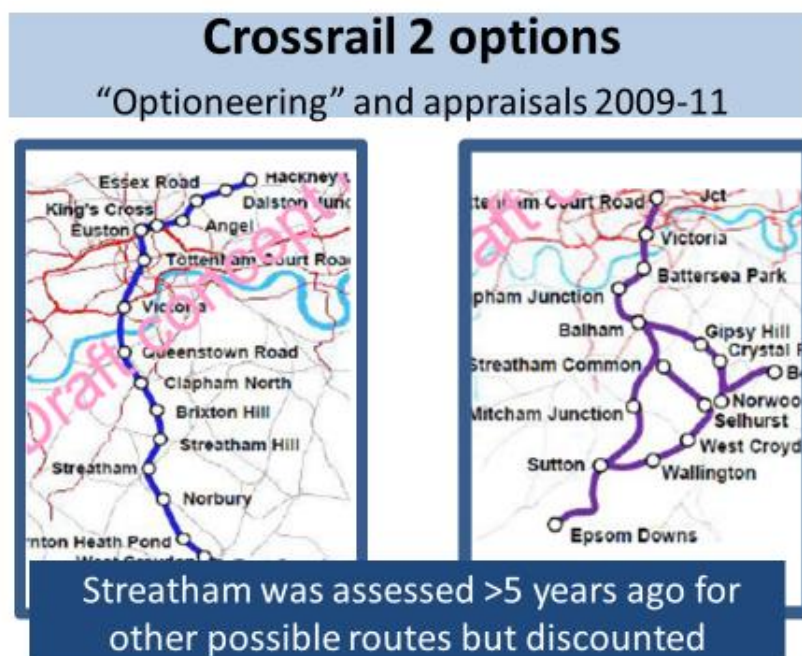
Office of Rail Regulation Interchange Data 2007 - 2014

Streatham	410,372	385,854	342,744	362,370	300,103	307,393	359,329	468,879
Streatham Common	118,345	191,005	175,741	185,217	191,538	161,136	156,635	197,575
Streatham Hill	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Streatham was originally considered for 2 route options by CR2, with the option of a route from Victoria to East Croydon (see chart) and beyond being the route selected for in-depth investigation. Streatham Action has been advised that the inclusion of East Croydon in the route, with its existing rapid direct train services to central London, would have meant that the route including Streatham would have showed only small journey time savings overall. Streatham has never been appraised in the context of the current route through SW London by CR2, to our knowledge.

Underpinning this, however, is the question of why the needs of Streatham (and possibly other areas in London) have been overlooked by transport planners. Identifying and addressing these reasons is key to identifying the most effective strategies for the future.

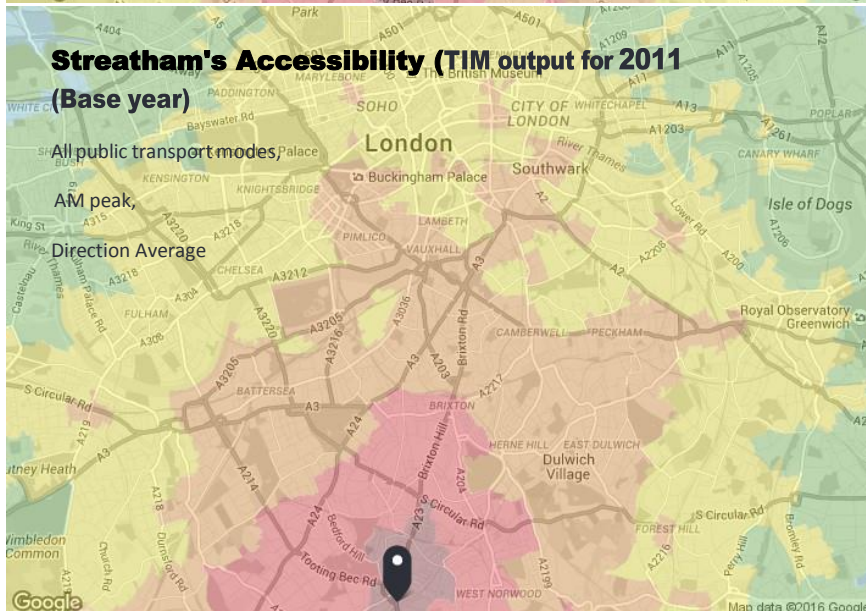


Public Transport Accessibility Level

TfL use PTAL as an indicator for the level of accessibility of an area in planning. Areas like Streatham, which has a PTAL score comparable with that of Balham are considered to have high levels of accessibility to public transport. However Streatham relies heavily on buses, meaning journeys are slow and unreliable compared with those from Balham, which has 3 tube stations and 2 railway stations providing fast access to most of central London. PTAL also has no reliability or capacity factor.

It is clear PTAL is a flawed tool for assessing passenger need with public transport provision. PTAL scores public transport accessibility, taking into account walk time to stop, number of services available and the frequency of services, but crucially, does not include destinations and travelling time. Streatham Action urges the use of more sophisticated additional data such as the TfL's new time mapping feature, TIM, which enables planners to map expected travel times when considering

transport improvements such as Crossrail.



TIM maps here reproduced from the TfL website show Balham has superior transport links than Streatham. Most of central London is accessible within 30-45 minutes from Balham, while it is 45-60 minutes from Streatham. This time difference must be weighed in the balance against the value of saving an extra five minutes of time for commuters from outlying London suburbs when considering the logic of including a Streatham station in the Crossrail2 network.

Map key - Travel Time

15 minutes	15-30 minutes
30 - 45 minutes	45 - 60 minutes
60 - 75 minutes	>75 minutes

PTAL also determines how much parking must be provided at new developments, with high PTAL scores requiring low parking provision, and vice versa.

“Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs) are used by TfL to produce a consistent London wide public transport access mapping facility to help boroughs with locational planning and assessment of appropriate parking provision by measuring broad public transport accessibility levels. There is evidence that car use reduces as access to public transport (as measured by PTALs) increases. Given the need to avoid over-provision, car parking should reduce as public transport accessibility increases.”

Para 6.43 Mayor of London's Spatial Development Strategy: The London Plan (2011)

In Streatham, Norbury and the surrounding area, the outcome of this reliance on PTAL scores to determine policy is manifest in full capacity usage at all three railway stations at peak times, one of the most congested and polluted major roads into the capital, the A23, through increased car and bus usage, and street parking at saturation. As long as PTAL alone is used to assess public transport accessibility.

Political Minority Areas

Streatham Action suggests that London Plans should be prepared with ongoing and thorough consultation with local groups and businesses aside from input from Borough Councils better to assess and identify key factors such as population growth and projections and other drivers of investment policy. Streatham has been in economic decline since the 1960s. The political will to investigate and present the case for the area to policy makers has been a frustrating factor. The fact that most of Streatham's councillors have, until recently, not been part of the majority party in Lambeth Council has meant that efforts to investigate and make the case for Streatham to receive the transport improvements it desperately needs have been fragmented by partisan lobbying. As a result, the council's input to the GLA London's Plans has neglected the needs and economic potential of the area. It is possible that this situation is replicated in other parts of London.

Border Areas present hidden opportunities

Streatham lies at the boundary of several boroughs-Lambeth, Wandsworth, Merton, and also Croydon, which means measurement of its needs (in common with those of many "border towns" in London) and benefits of meeting them are fractured by political boundaries which determine the collection and interpretation of statistical information that drives policies. A less boundary-bound consideration of available information – using small area and ward-level statistics to investigate border areas like Streatham would unveil considerable potential for economic regeneration across the Capital which could then be provided with the necessary infrastructure to bear fruit.

Strategic options for future investment in large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London

A23 Corridor/Streatham High Rd

Access to Gatwick Airport and the Croydon Opportunity Area to and from central London are heavily impacted by this key corridor which of which Streatham High Rd is a part.

Croydon, with London's largest population by borough, is expected to grow by another 15-20% in the next 20 years. As a designated Opportunity Area in the London Plan, it is in process of increasing residential density in the office-dominated central area, with capacity for 7,300 homes. In addition the redevelopment of the Whitgift shopping centre into a modern retail and entertainment hub to serve the region has major implications for transport needs that impact the A23 corridor across road, rail, and potentially underground too.

Streatham falls within the catchment area for the new Whitgift/Westfields Centre, and will be marketed by it to attract customers. There are no plans to upgrade transport links to meet the increased desire to access Croydon from Streatham or anywhere in the A23 corridor. It is inevitable that many of the thousands of new residents in Croydon will put further pressure on transport infrastructure.

In Streatham the A23, which is the responsibility of TfL, has conflicting uses that mean it is unfit for any of its variety of designated purposes. It is Red Route and major arterial road into central London and primary route for many key bus routes, while at the same time it is the centre of one of the major towns in Lambeth with associated shopping, restaurants, entertainment, and offices. As such it is often bustling with people, who are exposed to traffic- associated pollution from what is anecdotally one of the most congested roads in Europe, and whose desire to cross the road at its many junctions means that traffic flow is interrupted by crossings at many points, while historic buildings on either side of the road create traffic pinch points at which the road cannot not be widened to accommodate bus and cycle lanes without the radical destruction of the character of the town centre. TfL's Clean Air for London data indicates traffic flow around the St Leonard's Junction at just under 25,000 vehicles per day with 4.64 tonnes/km of NO2 pollution per year, of which almost half comes from buses. It is also dangerous with regard to road traffic accidents, with 45 deaths or serious injuries associated with the A23 in Streatham over the past 5 years.

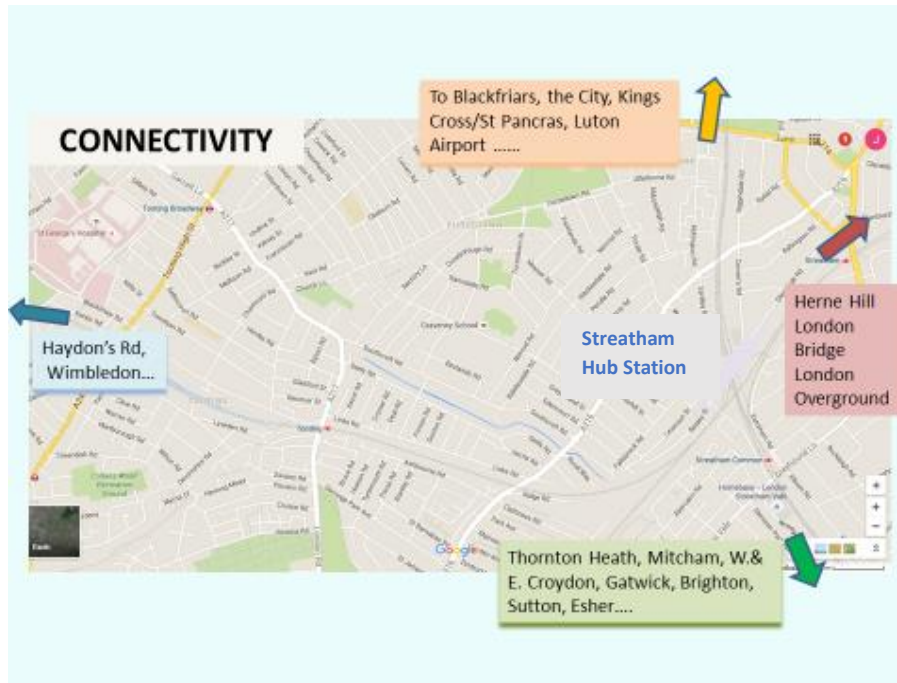
Streatham Action can only see a long term strategic solution in tackling the existing conflict in usage. TfL are proposing a radical solution in Croydon at the Five Ways Junction with a controversial flyover scheme, and Streatham Action would like to see a similarly bold approach to solving the A23 problem. A tunnel under the length of Streatham High Rd and through to beyond Norbury (another town centre which has its regeneration potential thwarted by the A23 and poor public transport options) for arterial A23 traffic would allow the High Rd to become a High Street with cycle lanes, a safe environment for pedestrians, and give it capacity to support thriving businesses and a vibrant town centre. A report by the Deputy Mayor for Transport, Isabel Dedring published in 2014 supports the creation of tunnelled roads - the A23 corridor is a prime candidate.

Devolution of Network Rail Controlled Services in South London to TfL Control

Streatham Action fully supports the call by the London Assembly's Transport Committee for control of services currently run by Network Rail franchisees to be passed to TfL. Devolution of Silverlink services in North London to TfL led to the development of TfL's London Overground, according to London Reconnections 2015 report, *Devocalypse Now: Taking Control of South London's Railways*. In the report, Devolving Rail Services to London, the LA Transport Committee specifically target South London rail services to become part of their responsibility, with longer distance services remaining within the remit of the franchise holder.

This would allow South London's rail services to be evaluated for the purpose of serving the needs of London, rather than the objectives of the franchisees whose frame of reference is to make profit from their entire network. As the London Overground has shown, it would allow for effective and practical long term strategies for London's rail network to be created, evaluated, and implemented holistically

Victoria Line Extension – a Streatham Hub with Crossrail2 Current and increasing pressures on rail services outlined above call for an urgent extension to the Victoria Line south of Brixton, through Streatham, Norbury, and Thornton Heath to Croydon. If Gatwick expansion takes place, this will be a necessity. In the current method of prioritising new routes, those locations with existing interchanges with the underground are prioritised over those areas that do not have underground at



all, in the cause of connectivity. This means that without a Crossrail2 station, Streatham may well be a low priority, whereas with one, there is the opportunity to develop Streatham as a transport hub, allowing connectivity with the Wandle Opportunity Area with the new football stadium planned for Wimbledon FC at Plough Lane, Mitcham, and Hackbridge, which

have space and potential for economic regeneration and new homes. "London will only be able to achieve its full potential if its infrastructure is upgraded to cope with the rising population (and) spread the benefits to additional areas of the city..." HM Treasury's Eddington report 13. *London's Infrastructure-Investing For Growth, London First March 2015*

What opportunities are there to increase the benefits and reduce the costs of the proposed Crossrail 2 scheme?

"Right now regeneration areas are absolutely at the bottom of the list in terms of priorities for transport because you prioritise investment where there are congested parts of the network and where people are not able to get onto platforms".. Commented Isabel Dedring, Deputy Mayor for Transport at the London Infrastructure Summit 2015. She continued, "If you have a business case for a scheme that is about regeneration or unlocking housing growth that business case will struggle to get through the internal processes of a transport oriented agency"....

A strategic change in the way transport infrastructure is planned better to prioritise regeneration opportunities would unlock hidden potential across the capital, and the A23 corridor including Streatham, Streatham Vale, Knight's Hill, Norbury, Mitcham Lane, and the A23 corridor through to Croydon is a case in point.

A station at Streatham would unleash great opportunity for regeneration, house building and job creation. The area has a considerable number of sites for new homes, offices, and shops some of which involve a change of use and increased densification. Streatham wards are below the borough

average population density, and subject to local planning policies that encourage the building of new homes in the area. Streatham, a Major Centre in the Lambeth Plan 2015 is identified as having "significant potential for new commercial and residential development.....keeping the existing requirement for 50 per cent affordable housing across the borough and providing "support for tall buildings in appropriate locations to deliver regeneration and economic objectives".

London needs 50,000 new homes a year and Savills estate agents have concluded that the bulk of the demand is for homes under 450sq ft., including affordable homes of all types. Streatham is better placed than anywhere along the proposed Crossrail 2 route south of the river to offer sites for such "affordable" development. Foxtons estate agents data shows the average property price in Streatham was £396,838 in March 2015, compared with £700,161 in Balham. As the Lambeth Plan 2015 states, however, "it will not be possible to achieve the significant levels of housing and economic growth set out in the Local Plan without the supporting transport infrastructure required."

The development of Crossrail 1 shows a clear need proactively to integrate housing into the planning for Crossrail 2. This is entirely possible at Streatham Station, with significant acreage available at the site including an open bus standing, Council offices and a currently empty supermarket with 2 floors of parking beneath - a rough guesstimate at 4 acres at ground level and vertical development already sanctioned as 4 storeys and above in the Lambeth Plan. There is also potential in the immediate vicinity with the run-down state of many of the buildings in the area up to the St Leonard's junction on either side of the A23. This should chime with the need for Crossrail to be part funded by the revenue from above station property development at its own sites.

A Streatham Hub station extending behind the current Streatham station westwards towards the intersection of railway lines towards Streatham Common station junction is an ideal location for a Crossrail2 station, as it could provide connectivity with services to Wimbledon, Farringdon/St Pancras/Luton Airport, London Bridge/London Overground, Clapham Junction, Victoria, and East and West Croydon and Gatwick.

Prosperous Balham offers scant further opportunity for economic regeneration compared with Streatham and Tooting Broadway, which both offer significant capacity for retail and office development, job creation, densification and new home building. New homes in Streatham are also likely to be more affordable than in any of the other mooted SW London CR2 station locations.

Streatham station has the capacity to grow to "strategic interchange" status once the CR2 station is located there, but this potential will be wasted for another generation, along with untold billions of pounds worth of economic regeneration potential in this large town in Zone 3, and of the A23 corridor towards the south if it is ignored.

Removing stations in locations in which the majority oppose them in such as Chelsea and Balham is a way to reduce costs for Crossrail 2 in order to fund services into areas that have great need, such as Streatham. At the same time, this would unlock the great potential of the area for regeneration, new homes and new jobs, with benefits spreading as far as the Croydon and Wandle Valley Opportunity Areas.

What are the options for funding, financing and delivery of large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London, including CR2?

Given that transport infrastructure improvements drive up values of both commercial and residential property both in London and in regions served by them, it is reasonable to charge a percentage of the uplift in value after the scheme has been implemented. This should perhaps be backdated to include areas now benefitting from the London Overground, and should also include

the Northern line extension, Crossrail 1 and HS2. If all of London is paying the same precept towards schemes like Crossrail1, those areas that do not directly benefit are unlikely to be happy to accept funding infrastructure improvements on the same basis as areas that they may perceive as advantaged.

Heavily discounted fares for the elderly, young people and key workers on low wages should apply at off peak times to attract revenue from ticket sales from groups that cannot afford fast transport options.

For road schemes, tolls could potentially fund the construction of tunnels into the Congestion Charge zone.

How have major metropolitan areas in other countries responded to similar challenges and priorities? Are there any lessons to be learned and applied in London?

Streatham Action, as a group of "lay" volunteers, does not have the resources to answer this question in a useful way.

Streatham Action www.streathamaction.org.uk

[Contacts redacted]