

From : Wandsworth Labour Group

Sent: Tuesday 30 November 2010, 12h 49min 17s

Subject:

Response to CJAG consultation from Wandsworth Labour Group

The presence of Clapham Junction Station brings great benefits to local residents and the Wandsworth economy. However, it is obvious to all that in its current state the station cannot meet its full potential and indeed is something of an embarrassment. Users of the station currently have to contend with a number of key problems, which in our view include:

- Overcrowding
- The state of the concourse tunnel (too narrow, unpleasant environment)
- The dilapidated footbridge
- Poor station access
- Inadequate ticketing facilities
- Bottlenecks through the entrance to the concourse
- Large and dangerous gaps between the platforms and the trains

The state of Clapham Junction was recognised by the independent “Better Rail Stations” report, which listed Clapham Junction as one of the ten worst category B interchange stations in the country. At the time Network Rail put in place a pot of £50m to improve those ten, however regrettably this funding has since been cancelled as a result of cuts to Network Rail’s budget. Other funding does exist for Clapham Junction improvement, and Wandsworth Labour has welcomed the Brighton Yard entrance which will improve accessibility to the station, and hopefully relieve some of the congestion at the St John’s Hill entrance, and the installation of new lifts.

This is just a small part of the improvement needed though to make Clapham Junction a station fit for purpose. Among the short term priorities for improvement, we must see improvements to the platforms, including in particular a remedy to the dangerous height difference and gap between train and platform, and improvements the concourse and tunnel to create a more pleasant and accessible, and less congested environment. The commercial environment could also be improved to the benefit of station users and shoppers, and Network Rail. The Better Rail Stations report estimated that improvements to Clapham Junction could bring an additional £900,000 revenue per annum.

While such improvements are vital, we share the belief of many users of the station and local residents, that in the longer term more significant redevelopment may be necessary, particularly in the context of projections for passenger growth. Over the next 15 years or so, it is clear that a major expansion in capacity, in the concourse, through the ticket area and barriers, and on and between the platforms is needed, along with major environmental improvements. If this can be achieved without fundamental rebuilding, then this

will obviously be advantageous in terms of cost and practicality. However, Wandsworth Labour remains open minded in terms of long term redevelopment and will work within the council, and alongside residents and local businesses to bring forward and support ideas which will turn Clapham Junction into a station fit for the 21st century.