CROXLEY RAIL LINK

Communications Strategy

Draft Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

- 1. Engagement with stakeholders¹ has been critical to the development of Croxley Rail Link and has resulted in strong support for the Scheme. Effective engagement with stakeholders and the general public will continue to play a vital part in the further development and implementation of the Scheme. An updated Major Scheme Business Case will be submitted to the DfT in Summer 2009.
- 2. This document provides the updated Communications Strategy for the Scheme and it has been prepared as part of the preparation for the Transport and Works Act (TWA) Order Application programmed for Spring 2010.
- 3. This strategy:
 - Sets out the specific objectives for Stakeholder Engagement, and the key messages that will need to be communicated and how they must reflect the objectives of the overall project;
 - Identifies key stakeholders and decision-makers to which these key messages will be communicated;
 - Recommends the most effective ways of doing this;
 - Provides a detailed public consultation programme; and
 - Sets out a recommended high level strategy for continuing consultation, engagement, lobbying and publicity activities.

Objectives

- 4. In addition to fulfilling statutory requirements to comply with the Transport and Works Act rules, the strategy will:
 - Ensure stakeholder and public involvement, tailor the proposals and ensure greater support and stakeholder ownership of the Scheme;
 - Help identify and address potential concerns which can ultimately help minimise
 the number of objections received, narrow the issues of objection in advance of
 the submission of the TWA Order and thus minimise the risk of cost and time
 overruns;
 - Emphasise the broader merits of the Croxley Rail Link and its integration with other policy aims, raising its profile and moving to a successful outcome.
- 5. There are certain key messages that need to be communicated and agreed with stakeholders. The focus and detail of these messages will vary according to their

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¹ When referring to "stakeholder consultation" or "stakeholders", HCC and LUL are referring to those parties identified as being impacted by or having interest in the proposals.

relevance to each stakeholder and the level of consultation that has already taken place.

Approach

- 6. It is recommended that a Communications Manager is identified to oversee, coordinate and implement the overall communications programme of activities summarised in this strategy.
- 7. A review of the existing stakeholder database is recommended to ensure that all stakeholders have been identified. Following this review, stakeholder characteristics will be analysed to better understand their requirements, interests and impact on the project so that project communications can fully address their particular needs. The significance and influence of each stakeholder should be included in a regularly updated stakeholder matrix. This activity will form the basis of the stakeholder management plan.
- 8. The stakeholder matrix and management plan will be living documents. The requirements of each stakeholder will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they receive the information they require to provide timely feedback. This will be especially important in minimising objections and as an objections-management tool post-TWA application submission.
- 9. Identifying senior stakeholder personalities within the area (but outside of local government organisations) who can be kept up to date on the development of the proposals and who can act informally as external project champions will also be important. These personalities could include senior figures across the business community, ideally who already have a relatively high press standing.
- 10. Political lobbying and monitoring will be important to help ensure that the Croxley Rail Link Scheme maintains a high profile in Westminster and that local politicians are kept informed of the Scheme and its benefits. This will help to ensure that the Croxley Rail Link has an increased chance of success in light of the current economic and political climate.
- 11. A "multi-channel" approach to communications is recommended consisting of:
 - meetings and interaction with parties concerned about the proposals with specific interests in certain elements of the Scheme, decision makers and funders;
 - establishment of working groups for specific areas where a particular type of consultation is needed with a group of people with similar interests;
 - workshops for elected members of HCC, officers and appropriate staff within TfL and Network Rail to explain the Scheme, gain further information on local issues and ascertain any further stakeholders we should be engaging with;
 - presentations to groups of people with similar interests, such as members, briefings to officers and Scheme representatives who will be staffing the exhibitions, industry groups, business groups and special interest groups.
 - appropriate, formal statutory consultation with relevant planning authorities, environmental authorities etc at all levels and stages throughout development of the Scheme;

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- public exhibitions/ leaflets for users, potential users and members of the public to learn more about the Scheme, ask questions and provide feedback; and
- a regularly updated project website/ web pages to help keep people informed on developments.

Public Consultation

- 12. A six week public consultation period is considered good practice and it is recommended that this is programmed for 2 November to 11 December to avoid the school holidays and autumn half-term, with the public staffed exhibitions taking place from 2nd November to 13th November. The level of feedback to be solicited will need to be agreed with HCC.
- 13. Members should be briefed both before and after the consultation exercise, clearly explaining the content and process for public engagement. Stakeholders should also be briefed, for example through business breakfast briefings and/or a preliminary exhibition. A preview of the exhibition for members of the press provides a good opportunity to brief journalists and gain positive media coverage.
- 14. It is envisaged that the public exhibition will consist of a series of exhibitions along the new route, (some staffed and some static) and setting out the proposed Scheme covering topics such as:
 - Scheme background and policy context;
 - Croxley Rail Link and the wider rail and tube network;
 - Links with other developments, schemes and key attractions (existing and proposed);
 - Costs and benefits;
 - Stations, facilities;
 - Operational information routes, frequencies, journey times;
 - Likely environmental impacts and mitigation measures;
 - Forward programme; and
 - How to provide feedback on proposals.
- 15. In summary, experience on other projects has shown that investing in a Communications Strategy is likely to significantly ease the implementation of a scheme.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 Watford has enjoyed economic prosperity over recent years, resulting in it becoming established as a major attractor for employment, retail and leisure trips and drawing in visitors from an expanding catchment area. It has a retail centre of regional importance and has been designated within the East of England Plan as a Key Centre for Development and Change (KCDC) within the London Arc. There are now signs that the town has started to suffer from its own success, with congestion threatening future growth and the town's KCDC status, together with a decline in quality of the local living environment for residents.
- 1.2 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) first acknowledged this issue in the 1990s when it worked alongside major stakeholders² to develop and implement the South West Hertfordshire Transportation strategy. One outcome was the Council's current role in promoting the Croxley Rail Link with London Underground Limited (LUL); a scheme where the existing Watford branch of the Metropolitan Line will be diverted to Watford Junction, with intermediate stations at Ascot Road, Watford General Hospital and Watford High Street. The proposed alignment is illustrated in Figure 1.1
- 1.3 Engagement with stakeholders has been critical to the development of Croxley Rail Link and has resulted in strong support for the Scheme, including a commitment to operate services and provide a financial contribution from London Underground Limited (LUL). Network Rail have been engaged with the project, both as existing owners of the heavy rail alignment, and because of the interface/interaction with the operational Direct Current (DC) lines through Watford High Street station into Watford Junction.
- 1.4 Effective communications and engagement will continue to play a vital part in the further development and implementation of the Croxley Rail Link. An updated Major Scheme Business Case will be submitted to the DfT in Summer 2009. It is intended that a Transport and Works Act (TWA) Order Application is made in 2010 and this document provides the associated updated Communications Strategy for the Croxley Rail Link Project.

² "Stakeholder consultation" or "stakeholders" refers to those parties identified as being impacted by or having interest in the proposals.

16. This strategy:

- Sets out the specific objectives for Stakeholder Engagement, and the key messages that will need to be communicated and how they must reflect the objectives of the overall project;
- Identifies key stakeholders and decision-makers to which these key messages will be communicated;
- Recommends the most effective ways of doing this;
- Provides a detailed public consultation programme; and
- Sets out a recommended high level strategy for continuing consultation, engagement, lobbying and publicity activities.

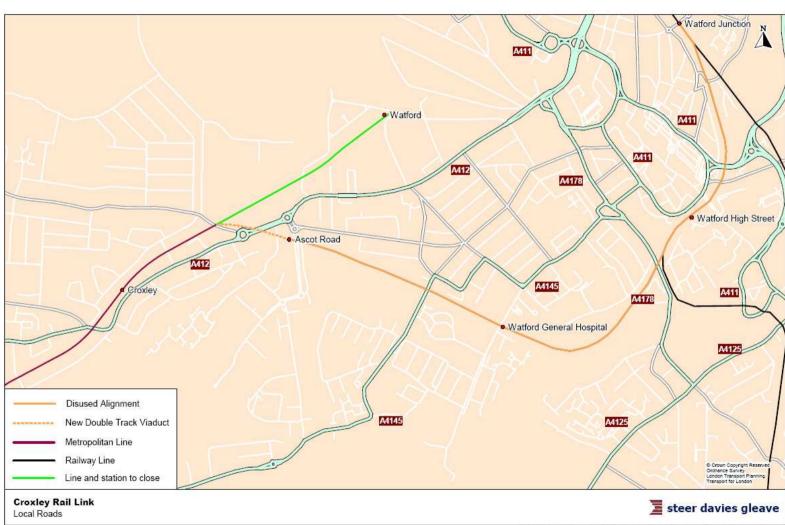


FIGURE 1.1 CROXLEY RAIL LINK ALIGNMENT

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Objectives

- 17. In addition to fulfilling statutory requirements to comply with the Transport and Works Act rules the strategy will:
 - ensure stakeholder and public involvement, tailor the proposals and ensure greater support and stakeholder ownership of the Scheme;
 - help identify and address potential concerns which can ultimately help minimise
 the number of objections received, narrow the issues of objection in advance of
 the submission of the TWA Order and thus minimise the risk of cost and time
 overruns; and
 - emphasise the broader merits of the Croxley Rail Link and its integration with other policy aims, raising its profile and moving to a successful outcome.
- 1.5 Specific objectives are required to undertake meaningful engagement and to measure the success of this process. The objectives for communications regarding Croxley Rail Link are that it:
 - builds on and captures existing support for the Scheme;
 - raises awareness among the general public and within specified target audiences (Government, partners, users, etc);
 - captures and helps gauge the level and nature of any opposition to the Croxley Rail Link proposals and address these appropriately;
 - presents information in an understandable way for non-technical people;
 - operates an open approach to views and comments arising from the consultation process and ensures that appropriate levels of feedback are sought and that these are appropriately incorporated into the development and design process;
 - is focussed and timely; Specific communication activities should be focussed at the right level for particular consultees. Different types of consultees will have different concerns and require different levels of information;
 - is inclusive. HCC and LU will identify, engage with, and be accessible to stakeholder groups and communicate clearly and honestly with them;
 - provides timely information about the proposals through an established schedule of interaction; and
 - complies with legal obligations, best practice and consultation policies of HCC and LUL.

Key Messages

- 1.6 There are certain key messages that need to be communicated and agreed with stakeholders. The focus and detail of these messages will vary according to the relevance to the stakeholder and the level of consultation that has already taken place. These messages include:
 - Opportunities and the scale of change in Watford and surrounding areas;
 - Consequences of the change in transport terms;
 - Implications in terms of economy, lifestyles and environment;
 - Information about the Promoters of the Scheme;
 - History of the Scheme;
 - How the Scheme will be developed and the programme for implementation;
 - How the Scheme will be funded; and
 - How to participate in the process and subsequent potential influence on the Scheme.

2. STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES WITHIN THE PROJECT

Stakeholder Interactions

- 2.1 Stakeholders often have information that is of real value and they can provide positive contributions to the development of the Croxley Rail Link project. The successful development and implementation of the scheme will therefore rely, in part, on the successful management of the needs and expectations of the scheme's stakeholders.
- 2.2 A database containing stakeholders that have already been contacted about Croxley Rail Link (along with those that will be contacted in the next phase of the project) has been established by HCC.
- 2.3 Identifying the precise requirements of key stakeholders, what their expectations from the Scheme are and the way in which stakeholder groups interact, are vital to ensuring the success of engagement with them. The stakeholder groups in the Croxley Rail Link project form a complex and overlapping set of relationships.
- 2.4 The main organisations comprising each of these stakeholder groups are identified in Table 2.1, along with a brief description of the role of each of these stakeholder groups in relation to the development and implementation of Croxley Rail Link. Some organisations will fall into more than one category. This list of stakeholders is not exhaustive and needs to be reviewed as discussed.

TABLE 2.1 MAIN STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATIONS AND ROLES

Category & Role	Stakeholders			
Internal Stakeholders	Members and Officers in			
They have a role as decision makers or are involved in the preparatory work for decision making, support and commitment from HCC, LUL and Network Rail is vital for the Scheme to progress.	HCC; Network Rail; LUL			
Partners All the partners involved in the Croxley Rail Link proposals need to be engaged with on a regular basis.	Go-East; Watford Health Campus			
Central Government	Department for Transport			
Regular engagement with officials at the DfT has already taken place on the development and appraisal of the proposals as they have progressed. It is important the Government understands that Croxley continues to meet policy objectives, provides value for money and that the evidence supplied to support these assertions is robust to secure and retain the central Government funding vital to the development and implementation of the Scheme.				
Regional Stakeholders	East of England Regional			
The Croxley Rail Link has been explicitly named as a priority under a number of regional policies to improve rail links and has support from a number of regional stakeholders. It will be important to retain and build on this support and continue to engage with regional stakeholders.	Assembly; East of England Development Agency			
Local Government	Three Rivers Council;			
Local Government partners will have an important role in the development of Croxley Rail Link.	Watford Council			
Other Government Agencies	British Waterways;			
The level of engagement required will vary between such agencies according to the relevance of the proposals to their organisations. Engagement with many government agencies has taken place through the Environmental Scoping	English Partnerships; Environment Agency; English Heritage;			
exercise - these organisations will be consulted with again to see whether there has been any update in their position.	Primary Healthcare Trusts			
Transport Operators	London Overground;			
Other services may be affected by Croxley Rail Link and so operators will have an interest in the Scheme. The London Overground services operate from Watford Junction Station via Harrow & Wealdstone, Willesden Junction and Queens Park to Euston. London Midland commuter services into London run to Euston from Watford Junction.	TOC's – London Midland; Virgin Arriva			
Virgin Trains also operates train services to Euston Station from Birmingham via Watford Junction (although these are considered to be inter city services rather than in competition with London Midland services from Watford Junction to Central London).				
TOCs are shown in the Project Governance organogram as third party promoters.				
Bus patronage may also be affected and so Arriva (the main local bus operator) will also have an interest in the Scheme.				

Category & Role **Stakeholders** Other Business Interests Local chambers of commerce, advertisers, Other types of businesses such as retailers may be interested in the retailers commercial opportunities that Croxley Rail Link will provide for their businesses. **Statutory Bodies** It is important to have early consultation with organisations and groups where Natural England there is a statutory obligation to consult (e.g. with environmental groups) to help **British Waterways Board** inform the Scheme development. As part of the Environmental scoping Organisations in Schedules exercise, a number of organisations have been consulted and further 5 and 6 of TWA Rules engagement will take place to see whether there has been any update to their positions. Concerns arising from these organisations could pose a serious threat to the Scheme, requiring costly redesign work or delays to programme. Consultation will take place with all applicable parties mentioned in Schedules 5 and 6 of the TWA Rules. The level of engagement will vary according to the relevance of the Scheme on the organisation. Where organisations that are named in Schedules 5 and 6 no longer exist, the nearest equivalent organisation will be contacted. (e.g. Natural England instead of English Nature). **Lobby/Interest Groups** Local Action and **Environmental Groups:** Local interest groups relating to transport, development and environmental local branches of national issues are all likely to be extremely interested in the Croxley Rail Link groups; Rail Passengers proposals. Council; Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee Landowners/Affected Parties Landowners/Affected **Parties** Landowners/Affected parties can pose a threat to the proposals. It is important to clearly explain the benefits and impacts (e.g. noise) that the proposals play. **Potential Users** Future users of Croxlev Rail Link, including residents As potential users, this group need to be engaged through public consultation, within the catchment, the press and website updates. Effective communication with this group can employers, shops, Watford help minimise concerns that are often due to misinformation or a lack of Health Campus information. Engaging this group early can help build on the positive image of Croxley Rail Link and minimise objections to the Scheme. **Public** Members of the public in general As with potential users, this group need to be engaged through public consultation, the press and website updates. Effective communication with this group can help minimise concerns that are often due to misinformation or a lack of information. Engaging this group early can help build on the positive image of Croxley Rail Link and minimise objections to the Scheme.

3. PROGRAMME FOR ENGAGEMENT

Background

- 3.1 Stakeholder engagement has already taken place on several levels. Croxley Rail Link has been in development for a number of years, is named in policy documents, has featured in the press and has a dedicated page on TfL's website.
- 3.2 Presentations on the Scheme have been provided at industry conferences attended by a range of interested parties. Information on the Scheme has also been available at other public consultations. Many organisations have been contacted as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment scoping exercise. Regular engagement has taken place with DfT to inform the Scheme development.
- 3.3 A quarterly strategic board meeting takes place between LUL, Network Rail and Go-East. LUL and Network Rail also attend the monthly project board with appropriate third parties including Three Rivers Council, Watford Health Campus, London Overground and EEDA.

Approach

- 3.4 It is recommended that a Communications Manager is identified to oversee, coordinate and implement the overall communications programme of activities.
- 3.5 In order to draw upon the existing support for Croxley Rail Link, identify and address issues, a review of the stakeholder database is recommended to ensure that all stakeholders have been identified. Following this review, stakeholder details will be analysed to better understand their requirements, interests and impact on the project so that project communications can fully address their particular needs.
- 3.6 Stakeholder positions should be reviewed and the significance and influence of each stakeholder should be included in a continually updated stakeholder matrix. This activity will form the basis of the updated stakeholder management plan. The updated stakeholder plan will identify key project messages that need to be communicated and will, for each stakeholder, identify:
 - dates when contact has been made;
 - who the contact was made by;
 - stakeholder position supportive, opposed or indifferent to the proposals;
 - information needs, actions decided and/or agreements reached;
 - information provider (responsibility);
 - preferred method and frequency of communications;
 - desired objectives of communications;
 - the type of interest;
 - details of any issues arising;
 - the level of influence the stakeholder may have on the Scheme; and
 - any additional actions required by the Promoters/project team to mitigate Scheme risks/maximise opportunities.

- 3.7 The stakeholder matrix and management plan will be living documents. The requirements of each stakeholder will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they receive the information they require to provide timely feedback. It will be especially important in both minimising potential objections and as an objection management tool post-TWA application submission.
- 3.8 Audit trails are invaluable in monitoring progress and ensuring consistency across the board where more than one person on the team is liaising with an organisation. They also prevent confusion if people at the consulted organisation leave or when dealing with objections contradictory to agreements previously reached with the objector or the objector's organisation.
- 3.9 For several groups of stakeholders, including the business community, it will be important to engage on a regular face-to-face basis in addition to the general publicity they might see. This is because the nature of the discussions and the consensus that will need to be reached are complex, and not readily amenable to other forms of engagement. Whilst some of these relationships may need to be formalised into regular liaison between the Promoters and the various stakeholder groups, and programmes for this Scheme, some of the groups mentioned in Table 2.1 are represented on the project boards, and engagement will be by this means.
- 3.10 Identifying senior stakeholder personalities within the area (but outside of local government organisations) who can be kept up to date on the development of the proposals and who can act informally as external project champions will also be important. These personalities could include senior figures across the business community, ideally who already have a relatively high press standing. Their role would be to reinforce the messages being given about Croxley Rail Link and its benefits to the wider business community and, when appropriate, to discuss the Scheme with the press.
- 3.11 Political lobbying and monitoring will be important to help ensure that the Croxley Rail Link Scheme maintains a high profile in Westminster and that local politicians are briefed and informed of the project and its benefits to the local communities. This will help to ensure that the Croxley Rail Link has an increased chance of success, in light of the current economic and political climate.

Methods of Communication

- 3.12 A "multi-channel" approach is recommended consisting of:
 - Meetings and interaction with parties concerned about the proposals with specific
 interests in certain elements of the Scheme, decision makers and funders such as
 DfT and developers, emergency authorities, utilities, Go-East, Watford Council,
 Three Rivers Council, Watford Health Campus, London Overground, EEDA,
 TOCs, Arriva, affected landowners;
 - Establishment of working groups for specific areas where a specific type of consultation is needed from a group of people with similar interests. This could include working groups for specific technical areas such as operations and environment;
 - Workshops for elected members of HCC, officers and appropriate staff within

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TfL and Network Rail to explain the Scheme, gain further information on local issues and ascertain any further stakeholders we should be engaging with, obtain buy-in and provide the opportunity to influence the Scheme. This includes a number of technical workshops which have already been set up to engage different areas of HCC, LUL and Network Rail on various aspects of the Scheme such as operations;

- Presentations to groups of people with similar interests, such as members, briefings to officers and Scheme representatives who will be staffing the exhibitions, industry groups, business groups and special interest groups. There may be a need to consult with affected landowners in this way too as it is likely that a residents group will be formed. These presentations can be a valuable way of disseminating information (and negating incorrect rumours about the Scheme) as well as obtaining feedback and identifying appropriate mitigation measures where necessary;
- Appropriate, formal statutory consultation with relevant planning authorities, environmental authorities etc at all levels and stages throughout development of the Scheme;
- Public exhibitions/ leaflets for users, potential users and members of the public to learn more about the Scheme, ask questions and provide feedback; and
- A regularly updated website/ web pages to help keep people informed of developments.
- 3.13 Figure 3.1 illustrates the methods of communication and associated messages to relay to stakeholder groups.



FIGURE 3.1 METHODS OF COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGES TO RELAY TO STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

		Messages to Relay				Main Methods of Communication										
Stakeholder	Scale of Change	Transport	Implications	Promoters	Scheme History	Implementation	Funding and Operation	How to participate	Meetings	Working/Liaison Groups	Presentations	Website	Exhibitions	Media	Reports	Written Notification
Internal Stakeholders	✓	√	√	√	√	√	✓	✓	√	\checkmark	√	√	√	√	√	
Partners	✓	√	√	✓		√	✓	√	\checkmark	✓	√	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	✓	
Central Government	✓	√	√	√	✓	✓	✓	√	\checkmark		√					\checkmark
Regional Stakeholders	✓	√	✓	✓	✓	√	✓	√	\checkmark	✓						
Local Government	✓	√	√	√	√	√	✓	√	√	✓	√					
Other Government Agencies	✓	√	√	√	✓	√		√	\checkmark		√					
Operators & other Potential Partners	✓	√	√	✓	✓	√	✓	√	\checkmark	✓	√			\checkmark		
Other Business Interests	✓	√	✓	✓	✓	✓	√	√	\checkmark	✓	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	√		\checkmark
Statutory Bodies	✓	√	√	√	√	√		√	\checkmark							√
Lobby/Interest Groups	✓	√	√	✓	✓	✓		√				\checkmark	√	✓		√
Landowners/Affected Parties	✓	√	\checkmark	✓	✓	\checkmark		√	\checkmark			\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark
Potential Users	✓	√	✓	✓	✓	✓		√				\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		
Public	✓	√	\checkmark	✓	√	√		√				\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		

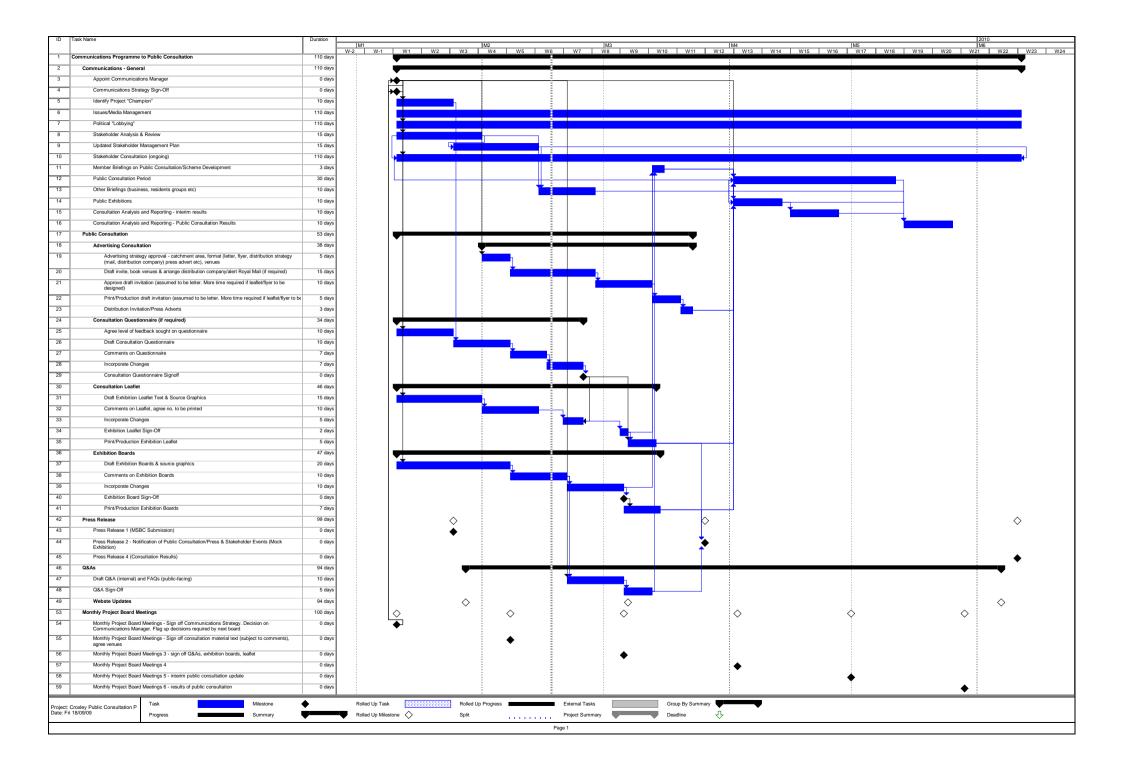
4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The overall programme identifies the Transport and Works Act Order Application submission as early Spring 2010, with the six week public consultation period taking place in January 2010. The public exhibition will be supported by ongoing stakeholder consultation as described previously. The public consultation programme is provided as Appendix A.
- 4.2 Members should be briefed both before and after the consultation exercise, clearly explaining the content and process for public engagement. Stakeholders should also be briefed, for example through business breakfast briefings and/or a preliminary exhibition. A preview of the exhibition for members of the press provides a good opportunity to brief journalists and gain positive media coverage.
- 4.3 It is envisaged that the public exhibition will consist of:
 - A series of exhibitions along the new route, (some staffed and some static) setting out the proposals and covering topics such as:
 - Scheme background and policy context;
 - Croxley Rail Link and the wider rail and tube network;
 - Links with other developments, schemes and key attractions (existing and proposed);
 - Costs and benefits;
 - Stations, facilities:
 - Operational information routes, frequencies, journey times;
 - Likely environmental impacts and mitigation measures;
 - Forward programme; and
 - How to provide feedback on proposals.
 - The choice of venues will need to be agreed so that they can be booked as soon as possible. Possible venues for staffed exhibitions could include Harlequin Shopping Centre, Watford and Croxley Green Library;
 - Notification to stakeholders and households in 400m corridor along the alignment between Watford Junction and Croxley. The distribution method (e.g. mail, distribution company, press advert)
 - Brochure/leaflet explaining Croxley Rail Link proposals, providing information
 on locations of exhibitions and containing a feedback form/questionnaire. These
 would be delivered to stakeholders, distributed at libraries, stations and council
 offices and provided at staffed exhibitions. The information contained would be a
 slimmed-down version of the exhibition boards.
 - Questionnaire/feedback form to gauge the overall acceptability of Croxley Rail Link. The level of feedback solicited will need to be agreed, but as a minimum there should be a section for general comment to provide the opportunity to give general feedback on the proposals, areas of concern or improvement for the Scheme and the opportunity to provide positive feedback. The questionnaire will also ask for a home postcode so that response data can be analysed. The

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- questionnaire forming part of the leaflet is also likely to form part of the briefing material for the press.
- Q&As to be prepared for officers and staff attending exhibitions and other
 meetings as well as for other internal members of staff who may receive
 questions about the Scheme. These may be added to as additional issues arise
 during the consultation period.
- FAQs, which will be public-facing and could be placed on the website and/or provided as part of a press briefing pack will be a slimmed-down version of the Q&As
- Provision of press releases and media pack to maintain a profile of the Croxley Rail Link proposals and help advertise the exhibitions. Press monitoring on the Scheme would also be useful. Engagement with HCC's and TfL's press/communications department would be helpful.

APPENDIX A COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME



CONTROL SHEET

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