



LATEST

Non-essential parts of Crossrail may be 'parked' to get line open in 2022

02 DEC, 2020 | BY ROB HORGAN

Non-essential parts of the Crossrail project may be “parked” to ensure that the Elizabeth Line is ready for its revised opening dates, Transport for London (TfL) commissioner Andy Byford has revealed.

Byford told The London Assembly transport committee that “everything is being done” to get the project open during the first half of 2022.

He added that parts of the project that are “not public facing or safety critical” could be pushed back to ensure the line opens by then.

He was speaking after [TfL secured an additional £825M loan from government to complete the job.](#)

“We know what we need to do, we have a very clear understanding of work to go,” Byford said. “We may choose to park a few things [that are] non safety critical and non public facing.

“I am confident that there will be no further slippage and no further expense to the public on top of what has already been spelled out.”

When asked which areas of the project could be parked, Byford added: “We are not saying we are not going to do things that save cost, but to stick to the timeframe we might park things to ensure that we open during the first half of 2022.

“These are things which are not a requirement for opening stations and not all of it is critical to opening a new railway.

“That is not to say that we don’t want them, just that they can be completed after the railway is open.”

The funding arrangement was agreed after a further delay and cost overrun to the project due to Covid-19 related delays in the summer was announced.

When that announcement was made, Crossrail Ltd said it needed another £1.1bn to complete the job.

Byford and deputy mayor Heidi Alexander confirmed that TfL now “hopes” that it can complete the project with the additional £825M funding package.

But both admitted that further negotiations with government may need to be had to secure another £275M.

Crossrail is currently coming towards the end of a second blockade of the railway to make up for lost time.

The blockade began on 21 November and will last for 11 days, Crossrail chief executive Mark Wild revealed in his latest update to the London Assembly.

During the Assembly committee meeting, Wild added that the blockade has been put in place to get the railway ready for systems integration dynamic testing (SIDT) which is due to begin on 3 December.

The testing will involve running up to eight trains through the central section of the railway.

It comes following a “[very successful](#)” [six week blockade](#) in the summer which was put in place to allow critical works to be completed and [make up for time lost due to Covid-19 restrictions](#).

Wild added that the second critical path is “hooking up the stations”. He added that to get this done TfL has brought in “specialists” Keith Sibley and Mike Dunham.

Sibley has been brought in as mobilisation and improvement director and will focus on the interface between delivery and operation of the railway.

Dunham has been brought in as stations delivery director and will focus on getting Crossrail’s stations over the line, with a particular focus on the [late-running Bond Street station](#).

Sibley and Dunham worked with Byford in Canada in his previous role as chief executive of the Toronto Transport Commission. Byford added that “both of these specialists are experts in what they do”.

“The first guy [Denham] is someone I worked with in Toronto and he is an expert in completing stations,” Byford said. “He was retired, having a happy life, and we’ve got him out of that to get this project over the line.”

He added: “In my mind, open means open and with this stations completion expert on board I want to open the whole central section at the same time. I am confident we can open with Whitechapel and Bond Street [which are behind the other stations at the moment].”

*Like what you've read? [To receive New Civil Engineer's daily and weekly newsletters click here.](#)*