

Florence Eshalomi AM

London Assembly Member for Lambeth & Southwark

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Planning
London Borough of Lambeth
PO Box 734
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04 December 2018

Dear Lambeth Planning Team,

I am writing to formally object to the planning application submitted by TfL to Lambeth Council for a second entrance to Southwark tube station (18/05029/FUL).

As the local London Assembly Member for Lambeth and Southwark and Deputy Chair of the Transport Committee at City Hall, I took particular interest in these proposals when they were first announced. After attending a site visit myself with TfL officers, I raised my concerns about the following:

- Opening hours and noise to residents
- Safety
- New street/pavement design
- Communication with residents

I will address each point in more detail and highlight my concerns that I believe you will share.

Opening hours

When on my walkabout with TfL officers I asked them about the potential opening hours of the second entrance. As is extremely clear, Greet Street is an extremely quiet residential road with very little traffic or pedestrian footfall. As such, if a second entrance were to be opened it would change the noise level of the street dramatically. Noting that this is inevitable during the day, TfL officers informed me that they were advising that the new entrance would only be open during regular tube hours and would not be open for the night tube as this would be adequately served by the existing entrance, therefore reducing the impact on residents during the night. Residents have informed me that they were also **promised** and assured that this would be the case by TfL.

After reviewing the application submitted to Lambeth I can see that this assurance has not been met and the proposed entrance will operate the same hours as the main station entrance (from 05:30 - 01:00 hours from Sunday to Thursday, and for 24 hours on Friday and Saturday). The new entrance alone will have a huge change on the noise level experienced by residents on Greet Street and in particular Tait House; proposing a 24 hour opening on weekends only increases this.

Safety

As I am sure you are aware, Greet Street is extremely narrow and a number of residents of Tait House have their windows and balconies sitting almost directly on the pavement. Those on the ground floor and closer to the start of Greet Street are within touching distance to the

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pavement. As Greet Street is currently a very quiet street, there is no issue with their proximity to the pavement and their right to enjoy their home and their balconies. However, should the entrance be opened they will be met with a huge footfall of traffic throughout the day and 24 hours a day on weekends. This poses a serious issue to residents right to enjoy their home. It also raises an issue of safety for residents who have windows and balconies within reach of the pavement. Residents are rightfully concerned about this and do not think the need for a second entrance outweighs residents safety and right to leave their window ajar or enjoy their balconies in good faith.

New street and pavement design

Again, when visiting the site I questioned the proposed design of the street. Greet Street is already incredibly narrow but allows for some resident parking and enough space for single lane traffic to pass through. Residents are extremely concerned about the widening of the pavement. This will see a loss of some residential parking and make it difficult for vehicles to navigate. Whilst I appreciate that tube entrances need pavement space, I do not believe Greet Street has the adequate space to accommodate this and again, it will be at the expense of residents.

Communication with residents

Communication with residents is one of my main concerns for this application. When visiting the site with TfL officers I asked what response they had had from residents and they informed me that they had been engaged in an ongoing conversation with residents about the proposed entrance and that the majority were very supportive. This now appears to be evidently untrue. It is my understanding that the residents of Greet Street and, again, Tait House are not at all supportive of the planning application, for the reasons I have set out above.

TfL have failed to make any contact with the Freeholder of Tait House; Grainger PLC. They have also failed to consult the residents of Ipsden Building who will be greatly impacted by the new station. For residents to have a voice and express their concerns to TfL, TfL officers were asked to attend the South Bank Forum meeting on 10th October. I understand officers failed to turn up despite agreeing to be on the agenda and instead sent someone to reassure residents that the item would be brought to the next South Bank Forum in December and no planning application would be submitted before this had taken place. I am therefore shocked to see that TfL have completely disregarded resident's views and submitted to Lambeth anyway.

The 2009 application for a second entrance was rejected on the basis that the impact on surrounding residential properties was unacceptable. Frankly, I fail to see how this application will be any different in that regard.

I would also like to add that I very recently exited at Southwark during the rush hour period and found it completely manageable. I had first hand observations of the passenger flow and can confirm that it was not a mad rush with commuters able to use the existing exits with ease.

I urge Lambeth to consider the points I have made in regards to this application and see that a second entrance to Southwark Station is not justifiable when considering the impact it has on the residents of Greet Street.

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,



Florence Eshalomi

Assembly Member for Lambeth and Southwark

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