

Consultation on proposed changes to bus routes in the Isle of Dogs (108, 135, 277, D3, D7 and D8)

Responses to the main issues raised
July 2016

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TfL response to the main issues raised

This document summarises our responses to the main issues raised in the consultation on our proposals to change bus routes 108, 135, 277, D3, D7 and D8.

Set out below are the main points put to us during the consultation and our response to these.

Our proposals

We recently consulted stakeholders and the public about our proposals to change routes 108, 135, 277, D3, D7 and D8. The consultation took place between 8 February and 20 March 2016

We reviewed bus routes serving Canary Wharf, the Isle of Dogs and Bow, to make sure that services can match future travel demand in the best way possible. We proposing changes to the following bus routes:

- 108 would be rerouted via route D8 between All Saints and Bow roundabout and at Stratford
- 135 would be rerouted to serve more of the Isle of Dogs
- 277 would be rerouted to Crossharbour and no longer serve Leamouth
- D3 would be rerouted via route 277 to Leamouth and no longer serve Crossharbour
- D7 would run less frequently
- D8 would be rerouted via route 108 between Blackwall Tunnel and Bow roundabout and at Stratford

How we establish what the main points raised are:

A tagging framework was created to summarise all the points that were made. The tagging framework can be seen in 'Appendix C – All issues raised' of our Consultation report. In reviewing the tags we have grouped them into themes to allow us to effectively answer the points raised, within the themes:

Main issues raised and TfL's response

Summary and decisions

We review all the responses and use them to help inform our decision making. In response to some of the issues raised through the consultation, changes have been made to our proposals for routes 135 and D7.

We will divert route 135 along Spindrif Avenue to ensure links between the Health Centre and the east of the island are maintained. One of the key points raised during the consultation was the loss of links to Spindrif Avenue, by re-routeing the D3 to Leamouth. From Westferry Road buses on route 135 would go along Spindrif Avenue, East Ferry Road, Manchester Road, Marsh Wall, Limeharbour to Crossharbour Asda.

We will keep the frequency of the D7 at it's current level with buses running every 6-7 minutes during the day Monday to Saturday.

Double deck buses will be introduced on route D8 providing additional capacity.

We recognise that buses play a crucial role in providing access to healthcare services. Route D3 will continue to provide a link to the Royal London at Whitechapel, and can be reached by changing buses at the same stop in Canary Wharf that routes 135, 277 and D7 serve (from the island).

Our proposals for routes 108, 277, D3 and D8 will be implemented as consulted on. Separately there is a further consultation relating to route 277 at Highbury & Islington where a decision has yet to be reached. Our responses therefore assume the current arrangements apply.

Routes 108 and D8

Broken trips (journeys unable to be completed without changing buses)

The main objections related to a loss of direct links. The D8 and 108 corridors are between 400 and 600m apart and therefore many who board or alight on one corridor may be able to walk to the other corridor and so maintain their direct link. Some passengers board the D8 at a stop close to a DLR station and alight at another stop adjacent to a DLR station and will have the DLR as an alternative way of maintaining a direct link. Finally passengers using Stratford Regional bus station might be as happy to use Stratford City.

It is appreciated that these alternatives will not be appropriate for all and that by swapping the routes there will inevitably be some people who no longer have a direct link. The scheme breaks around 740 (15%) trips per day on route D8 and 900 (9%) on route 108.

These passengers will need to interchange. Our soon to be introduced 'hopper ticket' will help mitigate this by allowing passengers to transfer to another bus without paying another fare if within an hour of the first journey.

By altering route D8 to reduce the extent it parallels the DLR new direct travel connections can be created which we hope in time will become of use to a greater number of passengers.

Reliability

Some respondents expressed concern that congestion related to Blackwall Tunnel would mean service quality would now suffer on both routes rather than just the 108. We note this is a risk. However, in developing the scheme, regard was had to existing traffic conditions and it is considered possible for both routes to offer a good quality service to passengers. We will continue to monitor service quality on both routes to ensure a service is being provided.

Longer Journeys

15 respondents raised this issue which may refer to the need to change buses; walk longer to their stop; concern over reliability or that the 108 routeing has become longer in length.

As noted in the issues above, it is accepted that this will be true for some passengers.

The objectives of the scheme are to provide additional capacity where needed now and in the near future as new development comes forward. It is also to provide new direct connections by reducing the extent to which the D8 parallels the DLR. It is expected that these benefits will outweigh the disbenefits.

Size of vehicles

LB Tower Hamlets and some respondents also expressed concern regarding the suitability of larger, 70 capacity single deck buses being used on the Campbell Road corridor by route 108. We have undertaken two route tests along the proposed route (one since the new cycle superhighway has opened on Bow Road). On both trips the vehicle was able to undertake the routing.

A key objective of the scheme is to cost effectively provide additional capacity where most needed. On route 108, this is in the North Greenwich peninsula. We are restricted to using single deck vehicles on route 108 because of the height limit in the Blackwall Tunnel. By using larger single deck buses we can increase capacity.

By swapping the 108 and D8 in Stratford a low bridge can be avoided in the Olympic Park allowing route D8 to be converted to double deck vehicles. This extra capacity will allow us to meet the additional demand expected to be generated by new development in the Isle of Dogs.

Routes 277 and D3

Objections were raised over the loss of a bus service on Spindrift Avenue. A particular issue that responses highlighted related to access to the health centre from the east side of the Isle of Dogs.

In a change to our original proposal, route 135 will now serve Spindrift Avenue (instead of route D3). As well as providing a bus service for those living nearby, it will also retain the direct links from the east side of the Isle of Dogs to the health centre.

To and from Crossharbour Asda buses on route 135 would run along, Westferry Road, Spindrift Avenue, East Ferry Road, Manchester Road, Marsh Wall and Limeharbour.

Objections were raised over the loss of a direct bus service to other destinations. Of particular concern was loss of direct links to the Royal London Hospital due to the re-routeing of the D3.

When reviewing routes, we look at how many unique trips might be created, broken or stay the same. Overall this scheme (277 & D3) breaks around 1,000 trips per day on route D3 and 580 trips per day on route 277. The scheme seeks to better match capacity with demand by serving the fast growing Isle of Dogs with the higher frequency, double deck 277 and replacing it in Leamouth with the lower capacity D3 service (which is still a high frequency service).

With regard to access to Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, re-routeing the D3 affects 175 passenger trips per day or 2% of all trips made on route D3 on a typical weekday.

The current journey time from the south of the Isle of Dogs to the hospital is scheduled to take 45 minutes.

It is acknowledged that changing the D3 will cause inconvenience for some. Passengers will now have interchange onto the D3 at Canary Wharf. This inconvenience is mitigated by the quality of the interchange (i.e. the D3 would pick them up from the same stop they alighted at) and the introduction of the hopper ticket. This will mean the journey can usually be completed on one fare.

In the future there will also be the opportunity at Canary Wharf to interchange onto the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) which will generally provide quicker journey times to Whitechapel and the hospital.

Route 135

Respondents were generally supportive of the scheme but some concerns were expressed over longer journeys on route 135.

This would apply to those trips which start at Crossharbour or East Ferry Road and travel to locations beyond Limehouse i.e. trips not covered by the higher frequency 277.

There are 357 trips per weekday making this journey which is 3% of all trips made on route 135 per weekday. It is acknowledged that by re-routeing any service, there will be some passengers who do not benefit.

We will divert route 135 along Spindrif Avenue to ensure links between the Health Centre and the east of the island are maintained.

Route D7

Objections were made regarding the reduction in frequency and / or capacity.

Given the expected growth from new development in the Isle of Dogs, route D7 will not be reduced in frequency buses will continue to run every 6 to 7 minutes. As with all routes, this will be kept under review.

Concern was expressed that those living on the Isle of Dogs are not being sufficiently considered. As well as the issues above, respondents commonly referred to the proposals not being sufficient and more was required given existing and future population growth. Examples of what should be done included providing a circular route and balancing levels of service between the east and west side of the island.

Key objectives of this scheme were:

- To provide additional capacity required now on Westferry Road in a cost effective way and
- To restructure the Isle of Dogs bus network to enable it to better cope with the additional travel demand arising from population growth generated by new development.

Inevitably changing bus routes will cause disruption to some but the scheme was based upon analysis of how people currently travel so as to minimise the disruption to existing passengers.

Providing a circular route in addition to existing bus services would be very expensive. Changing existing routes to create a circular bus route does not cater for the high number of passenger trips that are to places outside the Isle of Dogs. The existing and proposed network provides for many of these circular trips already.

Bus routes are currently focused more on the west side of the island because this offers a more direct route into Canary Wharf and because it is slightly more remote from the DLR. The construction of Wood Wharf will create a new, more direct route into Canary Wharf from the east side of the island. Once this is built it may be appropriate to restructure the local bus network again.

Significant development is planned for the Isle of Dogs and TfL is working in partnership with the Borough and the GLA to develop a planning framework. However it will take some time for this development to be realised – perhaps by 2031. As the bus network can be changed relatively quickly, the scheme proposed seeks to provide the necessary capacity for a shorter timeframe. By removing constraints to using double deck buses, it also provides a route structure that can more easily adapt to accommodating future growth. However, it is probable that more changes will be required in time. More detail on how the bus network might developed can be found here:
<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/bus-network-development-papers>