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Dear Chair,

Crossrail progress update: Autumn 2020

Following the summer Crossrail update, dated 30 September 2020, I am writing to you in order to report on progress across the programme over the past few months.

The past year has been both challenging and rewarding for the Crossrail project. Whilst the programme has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the year has seen a vast amount of progress in our efforts to complete the Elizabeth line. Reflecting on our achievements in 2020, we are ending this calendar year in very strong position.

There is growing confidence in our Delivery Control Schedule (DCS) and we know exactly what is left to be achieved to enter Trial Running, which will commence at the earliest opportunity in 2021. The journey between now and commencing Trial Running involves the completion of the complex and numerous safety critical assurance documentation. The Elizabeth line is being delivered to the highest safety standards and it is incumbent on us to ensure that this detailed assurance process involving the integration of 500,000 individual railway assets is completed diligently.

There is also a small amount of work left to complete on the routeway which will be undertaken between Christmas and the New Year. Following completion of the routeway and vital assurance work we will then apply to the Office of Rail and Road to gain regulatory approval to start Trial Running, a vital milestone to unlocking the opening of the railway.

Cost

On 1 December, the Mayor of London, Transport for London (TfL), the Department for Transport (DfT) and HM Treasury confirmed an agreed funding and financing package for the final phase of the Crossrail project. This agreement secures the future of the project and ensures that we can keep the momentum with the works on the railway driving forward.

Crossrail Ltd is continuing to work hard to reduce its funding shortfall and TfL is ensuring that further independent analysis of costs is carried out. The shortfall will initially be covered by the Greater London Authority (GLA) borrowing up to £825m from the DfT which will be given by

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the GLA to TfL as a grant. The GLA will repay this loan from the Business Rates Supplement and Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy.

Governance / Scrutiny

On 1 October, responsibility for the governance of the Crossrail programme moved to sit directly within TfL. The new governance arrangements ensure that decision-making between Crossrail Ltd and TfL is seamless and fully aligned during the critical final phases of the programme as the operational testing is undertaken and the remaining parts of the railway are completed and transferred to TfL.

The new governance structure simplifies responsibilities, with a single Elizabeth Line Delivery Group comprised of senior representatives from TfL, London Underground and Crossrail, under the chairmanship of Transport Commissioner Andy Byford.

High-level oversight is provided by a Special Purpose Committee of the TfL Board known as the Elizabeth Line Committee. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Transport, Heidi Alexander.

Routeway

In the previous quarterly update, Tony and Nick highlighted the major success of our summer construction blockade. We recently implemented a second blockade across the central section for 11 days at the end of November in order to finish the remaining defects and testing requiring completion. This latest blockade was highly successful, achieving 92% productivity against plan. As a result, we are now in a position where the routeway is broadly complete and ready for Trial Running. Final works will be undertaken between Christmas and the New Year.

On 17 December, Stepney Green shaft was handed over to TfL. This means that we are now in a position where all ten shafts and portals have been completed and handed over to the operator, a key step towards commencing Trial Running in 2021.

Stations

In October, Bond Street reached SC1 status. As a result, all of our central section stations are now certified as ready to support Trial Running next year.

Completing works at these large and highly complex assets is a mammoth task. Recently, however, Farringdon, became the first newly built Elizabeth line station to achieve SC3 status, marking construction works being sufficiently finished for testing and commissioning activities to start. The station has now commenced the 12-week handover process to TfL. Reaching this important milestone allows the contractor to commence demobilisation across the site and enables Crossrail to commence the process of handing the station over to TfL.

Paddington, Tottenham Court Road, Liverpool Street and Woolwich stations have now also reached SC3 status. Over the next year we will be completing and handing over the eight remaining central section stations to TfL.

Software

Testing of the signalling and train software is progressing well and we recently concluded testing of software configuration TR2, which is the software for Trial Running.

On 3 December, Crossrail reached a crucial landmark in its journey to intensive operational testing with the commencement of System Integration Dynamic Testing (SIDT), which sees the number of test trains in the new tunnels increase to a maximum of eight. This is a considerable step up from the four trains in operation at any one time during the recently completed software testing phase of the programme, further helping to build operational reliability in the run up to Trial Running.

During the SIDT period, testing is carried out on complex systems where they will be testing scenarios as close to operational conditions as possible. Signalling and control of the railway will all take place from the new control centre at Romford. This will provide an opportunity to test how well the railway systems work in operational-like situations and will be undertaken as the extensive safety case to the Office of Rail and Road to commence Trial Running is finalised.

Assurance

For Crossrail to enter into Trial Running, handovers of the routeway, shafts, portals and Custom House station assets need to be completed with the associated assurance documentation.

The key overarching safety documents to enable these handovers are the Safety Justifications for each asset. All of these individual documents have been drafted, with 14 of the 16 routeway Safety Justifications either endorsed or accepted by the Crossrail Railway Assurance Board (RAB-C). For the shafts and portals, 2 of 12 documents remain to be accepted.

The overall Safety Justification for the central operating section for entry into Trial Running has been drafted, signed by Crossrail, and is in the review cycle. It was submitted to RAB-C at the end of November 2020 and has since been reviewed for endorsement.

Operational Readiness

TfL Rail continues to operate Class 345 trains out of Liverpool Street in the east and Paddington in the west with a high level of reliability. All trains to Heathrow are now being operated by full-length 9-car trains, allowing the operator to build valuable reliability.

Works to complete platform extensions at Liverpool Street mainline station will continue over Christmas and Easter. Once complete this will allow full-length trains to be introduced on the Great Eastern Route next year.

Network Rail

Upgrade works by Network Rail to surface stations on the eastern and western sections of the railway have continued, with overall completion expected by mid-2021 for all stations except Romford, which will be completed at the end of 2021.

Works have also continued to complete the power supply upgrade on the lines between Liverpool Street and Gildea Park.

We are ending this year strongly and remain confident that this railway will open in the first half of 2022. The road ahead remains complex and difficult therefore next year will be extremely important for the project. We have a highly motivated team who continue to work hard, despite the challenges presented by the global pandemic, to get the job done and deliver this railway for Londoners.

If you require any further information about the project, please do not hesitate to contact us, or Crossrail's Public Affairs Manager, on 07597 190045 or by email at rossgarrod@crossrail.tfl.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Wild".

Mark Wild
CEO, Crossrail Ltd

CC: Andy Byford, Commissioner at Transport for London
Bernadette Kelly CB, Permanent Secretary at the Department for Transport
Gareth Davies, Comptroller & Auditor General at the National Audit Office