



Docklands goes East

Docklands Light Railway is planning a further extension to Dagenham Dock via Barking Reach at a cost of £150million.

The region has been identified by Mayor of London Ken Livingstone as an area of the Thames Gateway ready for major regeneration.

The line would help service over 10,000 new homes which could be built. There is also the possibility of commercial development and new jobs by the thousand.

A DLR extension would help the necessary investment and provide fast and frequent routes to Canary Wharf and the City.

To assess local interest in the proposals, a recent meeting brought together representatives of Newham, Barking and Dagenham and Havering councils and developers and landowners.

The audience was shown the possible routes and options and the result was an overwhelming vote in favour of a route to Dagenham Dock for an interchange with the C2C main line rail service.

"I have been lobbying for this extension for some years now," said John Biggs who represents

the City and East London on the Greater London Assembly.

"Building it will be a major boost for East London and will help take forward job creation, new housing and provide an improved environment. I am a great fan of the DLR, which has repeatedly succeeded while other railway projects have got bogged down and delayed."

The DLR will now prepare plans for route options which will be followed by consultation.

Selection of the best route will take into account various obstacles in the area, such as the Beckton sewage works and the river Roding while ensuring that the extension is integrated with future development proposals.

An application under the Transport & Works Act will be submitted to Government for permission to construct the extension.

"DLR's role has always been one of regeneration," said Ian Brown, chairman of Docklands Light Railway Ltd (part of Transport for London).

"Since it opened over 15 years ago, there have been extensions

to Bank, Beckton (for the Royal Docks) and Lewisham. We are about to start construction of an extension to London City Airport and North Woolwich which we hope will be closely followed by a further extension under the Thames again to Woolwich Arsenal. There are also plans for an extension to Stratford International.

"The level of support for us to plan a route to Dagenham Dock via Barking Reach is very exciting and we look forward to a successful partnership with the councils and other agencies that will become involved."

This new 3.5-mile extension, from Gallions Reach and with five new stations, could cost £150million. It could start in 2006 and be open for passengers in 2009.

Crossrail rethink The company set up by the Government to develop London's Crossrail has consulted on the idea of it serving a new corridor, from Paddington, then on the North London line via Acton or via a new tunnel to Chiswick Park.

From there it could go on the North London line from Gunnersbury to Richmond, and

then to Kingston. Consultation ended on 14 February 2003.

Thameslink 2000 was put on hold in January to allow plans for Blackfriars and London Bridge to be "properly assessed" even though its economic and regeneration benefits are now accepted by the Government.

The East London line is on hold following a challenge from English Heritage which has decided it wants the Braithwaite viaduct at Bishopsgate preserved. Tower Hamlets Council must now decide on the future of a scheme which has implications for the whole of London and many parts of the south-east region. Delay and extra costs are certain.

Road dangers More than 70% of Londoners want wide use of speed cameras to catch dangerous drivers, according to a YouGov poll carried out for Transport 2000. There are more than one million uninsured drivers on Britain's roads, partly because of failures of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency which is also unable to do much about the fact that one in 20 cars are unregistered.