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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR CAMBERWELL AND PECKHAM
SHADOW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT
SHADOW DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Sir Peter Hendy, Commissioner
Transport for London
Windsor House
42-50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL

18th February 2014

Dear Sir Peter,

Re: Submission to the Transport for London consultation on the bus service proposal for routes 136 and 343

I am responding to the Transport for London (TfL) consultation on the proposal to extend the 136 bus along the route of the 343 bus from Peckham to the Elephant and Castle.

Good public transport links are essential for the people of Camberwell and Peckham. Without a tube service, buses provide vital connections for local people to access local amenities and travel to work in the area and to other places in London.

One of the main bus routes connecting north and south London is the 343 which runs from Nunhead to London Bridge. It's a popular commuter bus that serves large residential areas of north Peckham not connected to the underground or overland trains. It is also the main public transport for Camberwell and Peckham residents working in or around London Bridge area. With no underground or tram, commuters have no alternative but to use the bus.

For years there has been a problem with the section of the route that runs from Peckham to the Elephant and Castle which is so congested during the rush hour (8am to 10am) that people have been left waiting from 15 to 40 minutes as full buses drive past without stopping.

It's a long running problem and TfL has been reviewing this route since early 2011. Every day passengers are repeatedly left at 343 bus stops along Southampton Way, Cottage Green, Wells Way and Thurlow Street route due to overcrowding.

In April 2013, local people, Labour councillors, AM Val Shawcross and myself launched a campaign calling on the Mayor of London and TfL to improve public transport along the 343 bus route, particularly from Southampton Way onwards.

It is welcome news that TfL has agreed to consult on the bus services along this route with a view to providing additional capacity in the area. I strongly support the proposal to extend route 136 from Peckham along the 343 route to the Elephant and Castle which will see 15 buses an hour during the busy Peckham-Elephant section. This is a positive sign that TfL is taking the matter seriously and I will continue to monitor the situation to make sure that this vital commuter route does improve for local people.

Southwark and South London have been poorly served by public transport for years. Camberwell and Peckham in particular are growth areas attracting new residents and new housing. Fundamental to the regeneration of this part of London was the promise of a new efficient transport system through the area and across the river to major transport hubs in the north of the city.

When Londoners are benefitting from the investment in transport projects such as Thameslink, the underground upgrades and Crossrail, we must ensure that residents in Camberwell and Peckham also benefit from investment.

Improving the 343 bus route, and bus services across Camberwell and Peckham, would send a clear signal to local people that TfL has been listening to people's concerns and is committed to providing a first rate bus service for the hard working people of my constituency.

Best wishes,

Harriet Harman MP

Harriet Harman MP

Cc: Cllrs Barrie Hargrove, Cleo Soanes & Mark Williams, Southwark Council
Val Shawcross AM, Lambeth & Southwark