

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD
09 December 2014 at 7.00 pm

At the above stated meeting the attached documents were tabled for the following items:

4. Thameslink Programme: Effect on London Bridge and Kent Rail services - Presentation (Pages 1 - 14)

8. HGV Signage Cramptons Road - Request from District Councillor (Pages 15 - 18)

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Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association

London Bridge Rebuilding, Risks for Sevenoaks Commuters Ver 1 - 5th December 2014.

Safeguarding local rail users – how the JTB could help

We ask Kent County Council and Sevenoaks District Council to:

- *recognise the risks to commuters and other users of the main rail artery through West Kent during the London Bridge rebuilding, and that these are likely to fall disproportionately on Sevenoaks*
- *express concern at the lack of effective action in advance by the rail companies, and TfL, to manage risks to passenger journeys*
- *urge rail operators to enhance customer information at stations, on trains and before leaving home*
- *press the Department for Transport and the rail companies to address these issues urgently, especially the problems with passenger information.*

Background

The rebuilding of London Bridge will provide a 21st century station serving three key routes into central London. At the end of the project in 2018, London Bridge will offer commuters three operationally independent rail routes through the station - (1) to Waterloo East and Charing Cross, (2) to Cannon Street and (3) Thameslink services to Blackfriars, Kings Cross/St Pancras and the north of London. These will operate all day including the peak period with easy interchange between the three routes. By providing each service with dedicated platforms much of the congestion experienced today by trains in the LB area should be eliminated.

However, the price for rebuilding a station including one of the busiest platforms in Europe (platform 6) while running the trains is serious disruption for rail customers.

Why is Sevenoaks especially challenged?

The morning peak service pattern is substantially changed while the evening service is largely unchanged (except for stopping patterns at London Bridge). In the morning peak SER have accepted publicly that the capacity on Cannon Street services stopping at London Bridge is substantially less than demand.

The additional risk at Sevenoaks is that in the morning our commuters get on last – if any space remains available on certain services.

Evening services from Cannon Street and London Bridge will again be very crowded but the longer duration of the evening peak should avoid the very heavy loadings in the morning.

Timescale of changes

From **January 2015 to August 2016** the platforms currently used by Charing Cross trains will be rebuilt. During this period trains to Charing Cross will not be able to stop at London Bridge. Passengers using LB will need to use Cannon Street services.

From **August 2016 until January 2018** the Cannon Street platforms will be rebuilt and trains to/from Cannon Street will not call at London Bridge. Passengers for London Bridge will then use Charing Cross services.

In addition the Thameslink services will be diverted away from London Bridge for the entire project so the easy connections to Farringdon, Kings Cross / St Pancras and Gatwick will be lost for three years

Risks to Rail Users

Operating arrangements for trains during this £6.5 billion project were agreed between the rail companies, DfT, Network Rail and Transport for London very late indeed. While work on planning the timetable has been going on for over a year, the final versions were published only in November. Arrangements to help passengers to plan their journeys with a very different rail service started to be planned in September. The information services to do this will not be in place by January – the recruitment adverts for some extra staff were published 1st December. Arrangements with TfL to allow passengers to use the underground and a limited number of buses to move between affected termini were only agreed in November and are difficult for passengers to understand.

It is clear that the changes to services will mean that **many commuters will have to catch different trains** to reach their place of work and this will affect train loadings. Many will need to change at Waterloo East as London Bridge is not available – eg to get to Docklands via the Jubilee line. This will cause crowding both on trains and at interchange station platforms. The access to the Jubilee Line at the Southwark exit from Waterloo East is limited in capacity, with a long stairway, and certainly not able to take the volume of people who currently change at London Bridge.

But the biggest risk that SRTA has been flagging for the last year to DfT, to Network Rail and to SER is the **need to radically improve the customer information services** and the approach to helping them, when things go wrong. In such a big engineering project work overruns, signal failures and other glitches are inevitable, and making sure that rail travellers have reliable information on how to get to work and – more importantly – how to get home is vital. The rail operator claims to have plans in place, but these do not address the basic ‘missing pieces’ in the railway information systems.

A small number of passenger facing staff are being recruited and they will be equipped with tablets, but their access to accurate and up to date information will be limited. It is very difficult to see how these limited staff resources available to SER can manage large numbers of passengers during a major disruption.

SER’s problems with passenger information

These have been demonstrated twice in the last two weeks. A combination of track problems, signal failure and train failures between London and the Tonbridge areas disrupted the evening service and caused chaos at London Bridge, Waterloo East and Cannon Street stations. The worst ‘incident’ is detailed on the SRTA website. The analysis of passenger social media messages is worth reading. It makes clear that:

- The rail operator failed to give accurate information on what had happened, and why trains were delayed
- There was no information given on how long it might last or when people might get home
- More attention was given to speeding up trains, by missing out stations, than to getting people home
- Platforms were overcrowded and left passengers feeling very unsafe, with frustrated people not knowing what to do
- There were cases of good information from the announcer at Charing Cross, but this was the exception

These incidents tell us that South Eastern railways, unable to handle disruption with seven tracks through London Bridge, will almost certainly fail when there are only four. SRTA has therefore drafted its own ‘survivors guide’ for Sevenoaks rail users, warning commuters that in a £6.5 billion project the cash for helping them through the work has been minimal.

Key points in SRTA’s advice to local travellers

Recommendations, based on likely train loadings, include:

- avoid using London Bridge and Cannon Street from January 2014 whenever possible
- have a smart phone and load relevant apps and website links
- expect the worst - think “snow” and you are unlikely to be disappointed
- if you have a National Rail only season ticket you will have to have it reissued to travel free between affected London termini and operate London Underground gates.
- SRTA’s website and Twitter feed will provide updates; share up to the minute information on services with fellow travellers through social media.

It is clear that nothing like the scale of passenger support has been planned as was done – successfully – for the Olympics. **But the mismatch between capacity and demand, and scope for things to go wrong, suddenly and without warning, is much greater than 2012.**

The rail companies need much greater investment in information systems to manage successfully, as well as a radical change in operator attitude so that priority is given to getting people where they need to go, with up to date and accurate information to help them make the right decisions. It is vital that the range of alternative route options for travellers is made clear and information is conveyed as quickly as possible when disruptions occurs either to the trains or the alternative tube and bus services on which travellers will be relying. This needs very close and agile cooperation between all operators in a way never seen before.

***Further information is available via the SRTA website and Twitter feed at www.srta.org.uk
The SRTA Survivors Guide will also be available from our website.***

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Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association

Survival Guide to the London Bridge Rebuilding - Ver1 - 5th Dec 2014.

1. Top Tips (sometimes called the Executive Summary!)

- a. If you can **avoid using London Bridge and Cannon Street** do so – these trains will be very heavily loaded. If you have to, check for alternative routes as explained in section 4.
- b. Have a smart phone and load **relevant apps and website links** , see section 6(a)
- c. Despite the £6Bn price tag for building work and new rolling stock, the relative **expenditure on improving customer information has been negligible**, especially in preparation for the inevitable disruptions, and we believe will largely leave SER staff and their customers to their own devices. Think “snow” and you are unlikely to be disappointed!
- d. If you have a **National Rail only season ticket** valid after January 12th 2015 you will have to have it reissued if you want to travel free of charge between London termini as explained in section 5 it must be reissued (free of charge). As of November 14th, the procedure for re-issuing has not yet been announced.
- e. **SRTA’s website and Twitter feed** will provide updates. Please share up to the minute information on services with fellow travellers through social media.
- f. At **Charing Cross**, remember the exit via the overbridge giving quick access to Embankment tube until 0930.

2. Introduction

a. Survival Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide rail customers from the Sevenoaks area with information to assist minimise the disruption to your journeys during 2015-18. This guide has necessarily been prepared in advance of the engineering works. The advice is based on the best information available at the time of writing and will be updated as the project progresses.

SRTA hopes that the project will proceed as planned and that the amended services will provide satisfactory alternatives. However, experience suggests that any large scale engineering project will encounter unplanned disruptions. There is also a significant probability that parts of the temporary timetables will periodically provide inadequate.

This guide reviews the project, temporary timetables and offers

b. Disclaimers

The authors have checked all the information carefully but changes may occur at short notice and outside the authors control so please check with SER before travelling.

c. Feedback

The authors would welcome feedback on the content of the guide as we expect to produce subsequent versions as the rebuilding project progresses. Please email enquiries@srta.org.uk .

3. Summary

a. Overview

i. Background

The rebuilding of London Bridge will provide a 21st century station serving three key routes into central London. It should eliminate the congestion that has been a feature of the morning peak for many years. However, the price for rebuilding a station including one of the busiest platforms in the UK (platform 6) while maintaining the train service is some serious disruption for rail customers.

At the end of the project in 2018, London Bridge will offer commuters three operationally independent rail routes through the station – (1) to Waterloo East and CX, (2) to Cannon Street and (3) Thameslink services to Blackfriars, KX/St Pancras and the north of London. These will operate all day including throughout the peak period with easy interchange between the different routes. By providing each service with their own dedicated platforms it is intended that much of the congestion experienced today by trains in the LB area will be eliminated.

ii. Timescale of changes

From **January 2015 to August 2016** the platforms currently used by CX trains will be rebuilt. During this period therefore trains to CX will not be able to stop at LB. Consequently passengers to and from LB will need to use CS services.

From **August 2016 until January 2018** the CS platforms will be rebuilt. During this period trains to/from CS will not call at LB. Passengers using LB will then need to use CX services.

iii. Changing your London Terminus

A commitment has been made that passengers should be able to reach their current London terminus at no extra cost even if they are forced to travel to/from a different terminus. To allow this interchange at no cost to passengers all railway tickets will be accepted on **specified** bus and tube routes between Charing Cross, Waterloo East, London Bridge, Cannon Street and Blackfriars. For full details see section 5 below.

iv. Consequences

From January 2015 the total number of trains from Sevenoaks to London remains almost the same as now. However, many passengers currently use Charing Cross services to reach London Bridge. All these passengers will have to find an alternative route. The current Cannon Street services are already the most heavily loaded at Sevenoaks in the AM peak. Consequently during the AM peak passengers will almost certainly need to find alternative routes. Suggestions are set out in the section 4(b) below.

b. Morning Peak services

Our assessment of the morning peak is that trains to London Bridge and Cannon Street will be extremely crowded. Loadings on services to Waterloo East and Charing Cross will probably similar to today.

Dunton Green passengers are likely to face particular challenges as explained in Section 4(d).

c. Daytime and evening off-peak services

During the day there will be 4 trains per hour to Waterloo East and Charing Cross leaving Sevenoaks at 21, 29, 51, 59 minutes past each hour. The return service will leave Charing Cross at 10, 15, 40, 45 minutes past each hour. Given the pattern of services it is worth noting that the 21 and 51 minute up services run fast to Waterloo East while in the down direction the 21 and 51 minute departures run fast to Sevenoaks.

At 14 and 44 minutes past the hour there is a service to London Bridge and Cannon street (calling at New Cross see para 3b(ii) below) and at 03 and 33 minutes past the hour from Cannon Street again calling at London Bridge and New Cross.

d. Evening Peak services

The evening peak services are almost entirely unchanged as the peak is spread over a longer period reducing the acute pressure on the London termini.

e. Weekends

It has been announced that there will be very extensive diversions at the weekend and the only advice is to check each time on one of the websites listed in section 5.

4. Re-planning your journey

a. Avoid rail heading to Sevenoaks!

Many commuters drive to Sevenoaks as a convenient railhead for services to London. As shown in section 3, services to London Bridge and Cannon Street will probably be under extreme pressure. Commuters using those services and with the option will do better to join their train much further from London to be sure of boarding their train and perhaps getting a seat.

b. City commuters

i. London Bridge & Cannon Street

Table 1 shows the trains leaving Sevenoaks during the morning peak. The schedule lacks any pattern and has some significant gaps. The first fast trains for London Bridge and Cannon Street are at 0549 and 0610. The 0653 and 0723 are likely to be very heavily loaded. Passengers may find it easier to wait for the 0728 although that train will be the first Ashford line service to Cannon Street since the 0549 service.

The slow services starting from Sevenoaks with guaranteed seats may look attractive.

ii. London Bridge via Waterloo East

Passengers who wish to reach London Bridge but cannot find a suitable Cannon Street service will be able to travel to Waterloo East and then change to the Jubilee line to travel back to London Bridge using their rail tickets.

While this will take extra time it will allow commuters to Docklands to avoid London Bridge. However SRTA has expressed to SER our concern about potential severe congestion interchanging between Waterloo East and Southwark tube station should there be serious delays on the Jubilee line.

iii. New Cross

An innovation in the timetable is the stopping of two services at New Cross which has a connection to London Overground services (4 trains per hour) to Canada Water (change for Jubilee line), Shadwell (and onwards to Dalston Junction with a connection to Highbury & Islington. This avoids using London Bridge station.

iv. Blackfriars (*and by changing at Bromley South to Victoria*)

There are two alternative routes to reach Blackfriars.

- Thameslink service from Sevenoaks which run via Bat & Ball. Typical journey times to Blackfriars are just over an hour. This service will transfer from SER to GTR (formed by a merger of Thameslink and Southern) in December 2014. Public statements by the new company do not indicate any significant changes to services or ticketing arrangements.
- Maidstone East line services from Otford. From January 2015 SER will be running three fast trains from Maidstone East to London Blackfriars leaving Otford at 0626, 0722, 0907 with a journey time of just over 40 minutes. These will be in addition to the current service from Otford to Victoria.

SEV	NX	LB	CS
0501	0558	0555	0612 (slow) <i>Changing at Orpington</i>
0549		0618	0625
0610	0630	0638	0645
0616		0701	0708 (slow) <i>Changing at Orpington</i>
0636		0719	0726 (slow)
0653		0723	0730
0656		0738	0745 (slow)
0717	0754	0803	0810 (slow)
0723	0744	0752	0759
0728		0755	0802
0737	0811	0819	0828 (slow)
0747		0815	0822
0808		0834	0842
0817		0901	0908 (slow)
0827		0856	0904
0856		0923	0931
0914		1005	1012 (slow) <i>Changing at Orpington</i>
0944	1006	1016	1020

**Table 1 Trains to London Bridge and Cannon Street
(Fast services in bold)**

c. West End commuters

It appears that services to Waterloo East and Charing Cross should be adequate although departure times have been substantially changed. The absence of passengers travelling to London Bridge may improve the balance of passengers to seat.

SEV	Wat East	Charing Cross	SEV	Wat East	Charing Cross
0501	0543	0549	0803	0834	0840
0543	0614	0620	0812	0840	0846
0600	0656	0702 (slow)	0823	0854	0900
0616	0647	0654	0831	0900	0907
0630	0659	0705	0837	0926	0932 (slow)
0644	0715	0721	0847	0917	0923
0649	0718	0725	0851	0920	0928
0703	0734	0740	0906	0951	0958 (slow)
0711	0741	0747	0914	0945	0951
0732	0800	0806	0921	0948	0954
0743	0814	0820	0929	1000	1006
0752	0821	0827	0936	1021	1028 (slow)
0757	0842	0848 (slow)	0951	1018	1024

Table 2 Services between Sevenoaks and Waterloo East & Charing Cross

d. Dunton Green

Morning peak travellers from Dunton Green are faced with a difficult choice. Most services on the normal route to Charing Cross changing at Chelsfield will be operating. However some fast services will be diverted to Cannon Street (and these may well be extremely full) and some slow services will be diverted to Charing Cross. In general therefore we recommend using slow services to reach London Bridge and Cannon Street and fast services to Waterloo East and Charing Cross.

The service pattern from Dunton Green to Cannon Street (Calling London Bridge about 6 minutes earlier) is as follows

DG	CS	
0603	0645	Change at Orpington
0639	0726	Direct
0659	0745	Direct
0720	0759	Change at <u>Chelsfield</u> (connection may be very full - not recommended)
0720	0810	Direct
0740	0828	Direct
0800	0904	Change at <u>Chelsfield</u> for Charing Cross & tube from Embankment to Cannon St
0820	0908	Direct
0840	0931	Change at Orpington
0909	1012	Change at Orpington
0939	1020	Change at Orpington
Table 3 Services from Dunton Green to Cannon St		

DG	CS	
0603	0654	Change at Orpington
0603	0702	Direct
0639	0721	Change at Orpington
0659	0740	Change at Orpington
		There is NO service to Charing Cross at 0720 – only to Cannon Street
0740	0820	Change at Chelsfield
0800	0840	Change at Chelsfield
0800	0848	Direct
0820	0900	Change at Chelsfield
0840	0923	Change at Chelsfield
0840	0932	Direct
0909	0951	Change at Orpington
0909	0958	Direct
0939	1028	Direct
Table 4 Services from Dunton Green to Charing Cross		

5. Transferring between Stations

The authorities have given a commitment that customers should be able to reach their current London terminus at no extra cost even if they are obliged to travel to/from a different terminus. To allow this interchange at no cost to passengers all railway tickets will be accepted on **specified** bus and tube routes.

You can use the following Underground and bus routes without being charged:

You can travel between the following tube stations

Charing Cross, Embankment, Blackfriars, Cannon Street, London Bridge, Southwark, Waterloo and Elephant and Castle.

(Note this does not include entering or leaving at intermediate stations such as Temple or Borough)

Alternative routes

Between London Bridge and Waterloo/Southwark on the Jubilee line or bus services (services 381 and RV1)

Between London Bridge and Charing Cross on Jubilee/Bakerloo/Northern Lines or bus services (services RV1 and 15)

Between Cannon Street and Charing Cross/Embankment on District/Circle lines or bus services (service 15)

Between Elephant and Castle and London Bridge on Northern Line or bus services (service 35, 40, 133 & 343)

Between Elephant and Castle and Waterloo on Bakerloo Line

Between Blackfriars and London Bridge on District/Circle/Northern lines and on bus services (service 17 (City Thameslink), 381 & RV1 (Blackfriars South bank))

Note rail tickets are valid for bus travel only between the London termini beyond those stops normal fares apply. Tickets should be shown to the driver.

National Rail only season tickets (ie not Travelcards) valid after January 12th 2015 will provide free travel as specified above. However in order to operate the ticket barriers they will need to be re-issued by SER otherwise ticketholders will need to use the manned gates at tube stations. Details of re-issuing awaited from SER.

6. When Things Go Wrong - Information sources

An inevitable feature of any major engineering project is unplanned disruption. Listed below are a number of sources of information which may be able to provide useful information.

i. Real Time Trains

A useful website is *Real Time Trains*. Details of all trains around Sevenoaks can be found at <http://www.realtimetrains.co.uk/search/advanced/SEV>

For details of other stations replace *SEV for Sevenoaks*, by *CHX for Charing Cross*, *CST for Cannon Street and LBG for London Bridge* etc. There is also a search box for other stations. The site also has an app for mobile phones. However if trains are diverted the site is slow to amend the

ii. Network Rail Enquiries

This site is the official industry site but has not performed well when disruption occurs because of its dependence on pre-stored timetables.

<http://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service/ldbboard/dep/SEV>

It offers departures and arrivals from a specified station using the same code as in (i) above.

iii. Phone numbers

Telephone numbers include

SER Customer Services Team **01732 378 751**

iv. SER Twitter

This is available at Twitter [@SE_Railway](#) providing help and advice from the SER customer services team.

v. SER Website

This includes a journey planner as well as a limited newsfeed

<http://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/>

vi. Limitations on smart phones in congested locations

SER is placing much emphasis on smart phones and tablets to circulate information during disruptions to both staff and customers. Many of us have experienced a significant degradation in service on our mobile devices at major sporting events as everyone uses mobile devices.

SRTA has expressed concern that large groups of customers and staff using mobiles to download information may suffer loss of data services or even voice services. In central London mobile phone cells cover small areas and a short walk can take you to a new cell which is fully functional. SRTA has pointed out to SER that their staff without this luxury of moving away from a crowded concourse may suffer significant issues in obtaining information during disruptions.

7. Claiming compensation for delays

SER operate a Delay-Repay scheme to compensate customers for delays over 30 minutes, including season ticket holders. Full details are available from <http://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/contact/delay-repay/>

In view of Sevenoaks being the last station before London for many AM peak services, we are concerned about trains being too full to board. SER have responded to us that "If a customer chooses not to board a train because it is crowded I'm afraid that compensation would not apply. However, if a train skipped a stop or stops because it was crowded (or to recover the timetable in the event of disruption), then assuming that boarding the next service would delay the customer's journey by 30 minutes or more, then compensation would be paid."

8. Train loading information

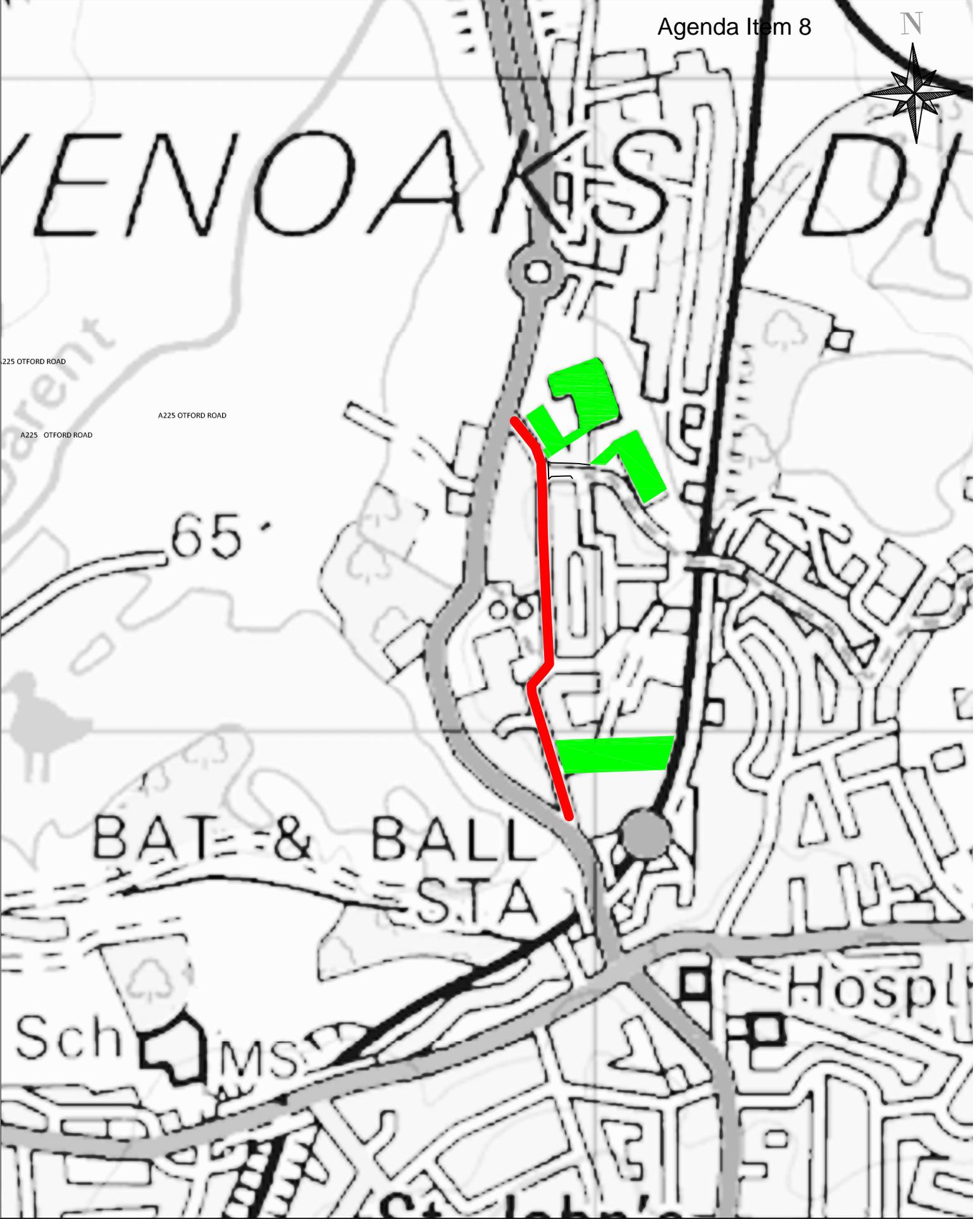
The morning peak is going to be the period of maximum stress on the new timetable. SRTA will attempt through its website and Twitter feed to provide information to local commuters. If we can get sufficient information we may be able to provide a traffic light guide to loading on peak period trains to indicate the most heavily loaded.

9. Feedback

The SRTA will be continuing its close contact with SER throughout the whole period. We welcome feedback on services throughout this period which can inform our representations to SER.

Finally this short guide has been provided to assist travellers. We are planning to revise this from time to time as circumstances change and so corrections and suggestions would be very welcome enquiries@srta.org.uk

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Location: CRAMPTONS ROAD, SEVENOAKS

-  CRAMPTONS ROAD
-  INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS AREAS ACCESSED FROM CRAMPTONS ROAD



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TYPICAL VIEWS OF CRAMPTON'S ROAD, SEVENOAKS



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