

14 February 2024

To: Andrew Lord, Commissioner of Transport for London  
Seb Dance, Deputy Mayor for Transport

Dear Commissioner and Deputy Mayor,

TfL themselves have made clear, you are proposing a 'package' of two entirely independent schemes at Silvertown; a new tunnel at Silvertown for general traffic, with or without a toll; and a new toll on the existing Blackwall Tunnel. They are independent because each can be fully achieved without the other, and because while Silvertown is being built, the new toll on Blackwall is, at the moment, just a proposal, which any future mayor will have a choice to implement, or not.

We know from TfL's traffic modelling that opening the Silvertown tunnel to general traffic always increases traffic - not just in 'hypothetical' situations, but in all situations with or without tolling. This is the case if the proposed toll on Blackwall tunnel is not implemented, where opening an un-tolled Silvertown increases cross-river traffic by 15-30%. And if the proposed toll on Blackwall is implemented, where opening a tolled Silvertown increases cross-river traffic from substantially below the status quo, back to the status quo. In each case, the increase in traffic caused by opening Silvertown will certainly cause a significant increase in carbon emissions, and PM and NOX emissions. This is why we have asked you to quantify these increases, in tons annually.

TfL's traffic modelling also shows that opening Silvertown to general traffic will direct 20-30,000 more vehicles into Newham every day. Again this is true in every circumstance where the tunnel is opened - tolls or no tolls. This is why we are asking you to make public the additional pollution burden in Newham that the tunnel will deliver, in tons of NO2 and PM annually.

The only modelling - economic or environmental - that you have allowed the public to see aggregates the effects of both schemes, if implemented simultaneously. This allows you to effectively conceal the fact that opening the Silvertown Tunnel itself always worsens traffic carbon emissions and local pollution - which means that, for any Mayor who does not want to undermine London's climate and pollution targets, not opening Silvertown to general traffic, and instead repurposing it in ways suggested, will always be the best policy, whether or not they decide to toll Blackwall to move towards those targets.

Likewise, only releasing the aggregated economic modelling - and refusing to update the modelling with traffic forecasts based on the 2018 MTS - means you have provided no evidence at all that opening Silvertown to general traffic has any economic benefits; to provide this you will need to compare the economic benefits of tolling Blackwall and opening a tolled Silvertown with the economic

benefits of just tolling Blackwall to remove congestion there. This is why we have asked you for disaggregated economic modelling, using the updated forecasts.

Your responses to us so far regarding the burden of producing the modelling we've asked for appear to suggest that you yourselves have never actually modelled the disaggregated economic and environmental effects of the Silvertown Tunnel itself. If this is the case, it seems reckless to be proceeding with this project without knowing any of its actual environmental and economic impact. We would suggest you do this work immediately, for yourselves as much as for anyone else, so that you have the information you need to make a rational decision as to whether to proceed with the project as planned. Making that information public will be very little further work.

If, however, you again choose not to respond to this email, and not to answer the questions we set out for you in our initial email at the start of this chain, we will assume:

- i) That opening the Silvertown Tunnel to general traffic worsens traffic, CO2 emissions and local pollution
- ii) That there are no proven benefits, economic, environmental, or otherwise to opening the tunnel to general traffic.
- iii) That this administration is determined to move forward with this scheme as planned while deliberately remaining entirely blind to its actual climate, pollution and health impact.

Yours sincerely,  
Victoria Rance  
Simon Pirani  
Dominic Leggett  
On behalf of Stop the Silvertown Tunnel Coalition