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Web Site: [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

03 March 2011

Dear xxxxxx

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST F0007346**

I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information which you requested on 6 February. You requested information on: *Cross Rail a. What factors and considerations were taken into account when deciding to put it underground i.e tunnel? B. Was consideration ever given to having the carriages double decker so that capacity could be increased, as demand will grow?*

The DfT website <http://www.dft.gov.uk> has a section on Crossrail and details of links to various documents including studies on the full range of options considered before the Crossrail route was defined. The website also provides information on the history of the passage of the Crossrail Act. A search of our records has found no information on any consideration of an alternative to running elements of the Crossrail route underground.

The second part of your request asks about running double decker carriages on Crossrail. The Department understands that there will need to be future capacity improvements over the whole railway network and that new infrastructure should not unduly restrict future growth. This is demonstrated by the publication of the Rail Technical Strategy in July 2007, available on our website at

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/whitepapers/whitepapercm7176/railwhitepapertechnicalstrategy/>

In support of the notion that higher capacity trains might be required in the future, we asked Network Rail to look at the opportunities for double deck trains on the UK Rail Network. Their report is also available on our website at

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/whitepapers/whitepapercm7176/railwhitepapersupportingdocs/provevalddtrains.pdf> .

The Crossrail tunnels were authorised by the Crossrail Act 2008 which was introduced into Parliament as a Hybrid Bill in February 2005, prior to the development of the Technical Strategy. The Act lays down the physical constraints that are authorised for the construction of new infrastructure and any significant alterations, such as a larger tunnel

diameter, would require changes to the current authorisation and would involve considerable delay and additional cost.

That said, the Department has evaluated the opportunities for passing double deck trains through the Crossrail tunnel as designed and has concluded that the continental "GB" gauge trains could physically fit through the tunnels as designed, albeit with the need for alterations to the overhead power supply and platforms. The areas around the tunnel wall that could affect the introduction of double deck train would also need to be kept clear of significant cables and signals so as to facilitate future conversion. This "GB" gauge is similar to the profile of the double deck trains used on the RER in Paris. The platforms and overhead power supplies will need to be designed for the normal main line trains initially and then if capacity becomes an issue in the future, there would need to be a project for remaining conversion works to accept higher capacity trains. Accordingly you can see that we have taken a pragmatic approach to ensuring that the tunnel is future proofed for the potential introduction of double deck trains without unduly adding cost or complication at this stage.

For further information about the Crossrail business case, please visit <http://www.crossrail.co.uk/the-railway/crossrail-wider-economic-benefits> to find out more.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04  
Ashdown House  
Sedlescombe Road North  
Hastings  
East Sussex TN37 7GA  
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Becky Wood  
Deputy Director  
Crossrail & Associated Services

## **Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner**

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF