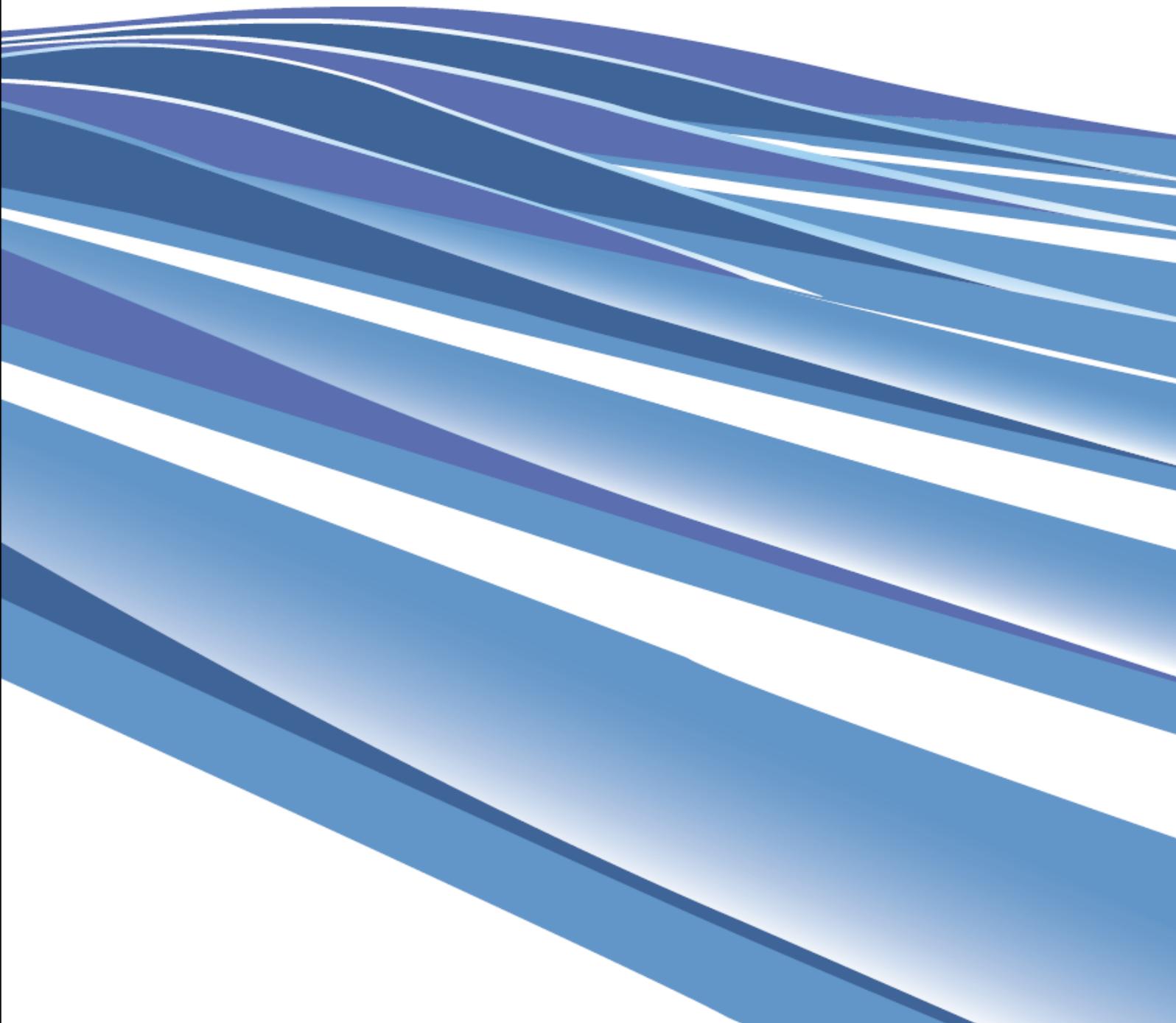


# CONSULTATION STATEMENT

LONDON BRIDGE STATION



## **1 Executive Summary**

As part of Network Rail's planning application submission to London Borough of Southwark for London Bridge station, Network Rail has publicised its proposals and exhibited the plans at the station and on its website.

This has been to raise awareness of the scheme and to allow interested parties the opportunity to comment on the proposed redevelopment. Alongside this, we have met with a number of different stakeholders, groups and organisations in and around the borough to discuss our plans.

Based on responses received after the exhibition, there is overwhelming support for Network Rail's plans. 93% strongly support or support Network Rail's proposals to transform the station.

The stakeholder engagement to date is only the start of Network Rail's efforts in this regard. We expect this to last the lifetime of the project and will look to build on the track record of the Thameslink programme – in particular on comparable projects at Farringdon and Blackfriars.

## **2 Introduction**

The scheme which Network Rail wish to proceed with is driven by a requirement to increase the number of 'through' services at the station and to increase passenger capacity by about two thirds above current levels.

The proposals can be summarised as: Provision of new station layout at London Bridge, including construction of a new concourse, together with the demolition of existing arches; the demolition of the listed train shed and part of the wall on St Thomas Street; and the demolition of 84 Tooley Street and the construction of new replacement facades on Tooley Street and St Thomas Street; landscaping and other works associated with the station.

In May 2011, following detailed pre application discussions with London Borough of Southwark and Greater London Assembly planning officers, these plans were presented to the public to inform and to gather feedback.

## **3 Exhibiting the plans**

The proposals for the station were exhibited in advance of submitting the planning application with the intention of:

- Explaining the proposals with good clear information
- Gathering feedback
- Engaging with the local community well before work is due to start on the project

The proposals were displayed at London Bridge station over five days between Tuesday 17 May and Saturday 21 May. Representatives from the project team were available between 08:00 and 19:00 (14:00 on Saturday) each day to explain the plans and to answer questions. Over the five days, more than 2,500 people stopped at the display to either talk to a member of staff or to take a leaflet and comment card.

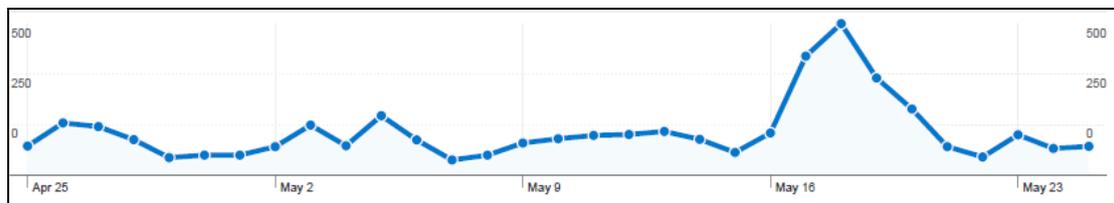


**Network Rail staff discuss the proposals with station users**

See appendix for copies of the exhibition materials

The information available at the station was replicated on the [Network Rail website](#) with the proposals available to view from Friday 13 May. See appendix for Network Rail website content

Over the month to May 23 (the week after the exhibition finished), the site was viewed 4,416 times, by 2,610 unique viewers. As the graph below demonstrates, the major spike in activity was during the week of the exhibition – in particular the first two days of the exhibition – before visits to the site returned to steadier levels.



**Graph showing visits to Network Rail web page on London Bridge redevelopment**

#### **4 Promoting the plans and exhibition**

To raise awareness of the proposals and the exhibition, activity included:

- [News release on 20 April](#), generating coverage including the Evening Standard, [SE1 website](#) and ITV local news – see appendix
- Follow up media activity on 17 May, including further coverage in the [Evening Standard](#)
- Door drop flyers sent to approximately 2,000 homes (those within an 850m radius of the station) on 12 May – see appendix
- Emails to LBS councillors on 20 April and 16 May highlighting forthcoming exhibition
- Colour adverts in the South London Press (13 May) and Southwark News (12 May) – see appendix
- Details on Team London Bridge and Better Bankside website and emails to members
- Details on Thameslink programme email to rail users
- Posters throughout London Bridge station to help reach station users who would not walk past the exhibition – see exhibition
- Announcements on the station PA system whilst the exhibition was on
- Approximately 5,000 leaflets (additional to those taken from the stand) handed to station users

#### **5 Meetings and briefings with stakeholders and interested groups**

Extensive meetings, briefings, presentations and other similar activity have been taking place over the lifetime of the projects development. Since November 2011, when funding for the station redevelopment was confirmed by Government, these meetings have included:

- Bermondsey Street Area Partnership
- Bermondsey Village Action Group – three meetings between March and May
- Elected members – including Simon Hughes MP, Caroline Pidgeon and Val Shawcross AMs
- London Borough of Southwark - members
- London Borough of Southwark – Community Council meetings
  - Rotherhithe
  - Borough and Bankside
  - Bermondsey
- London Travel Watch – meeting with officers and presentation to Board
  - Passenger Focus – meeting with officers and presentation to Board
- Mayor of London – presentation to Mayor and officers
- Southwark Chamber of Commerce – including meetings with chair and vice-chair and speech / Q & A with members
- Southwark Living Streets
- Team London Bridge – including meetings with officers and presentations at events for members

## **6 Feedback on the proposals**

### **Exhibition**

More than 2,500 stopped at the stand on the station, either to take a leaflet or to talk to a member of staff. Around a further 5,000 leaflets (with comment cards) were handed out around the station over the week of 16 May.

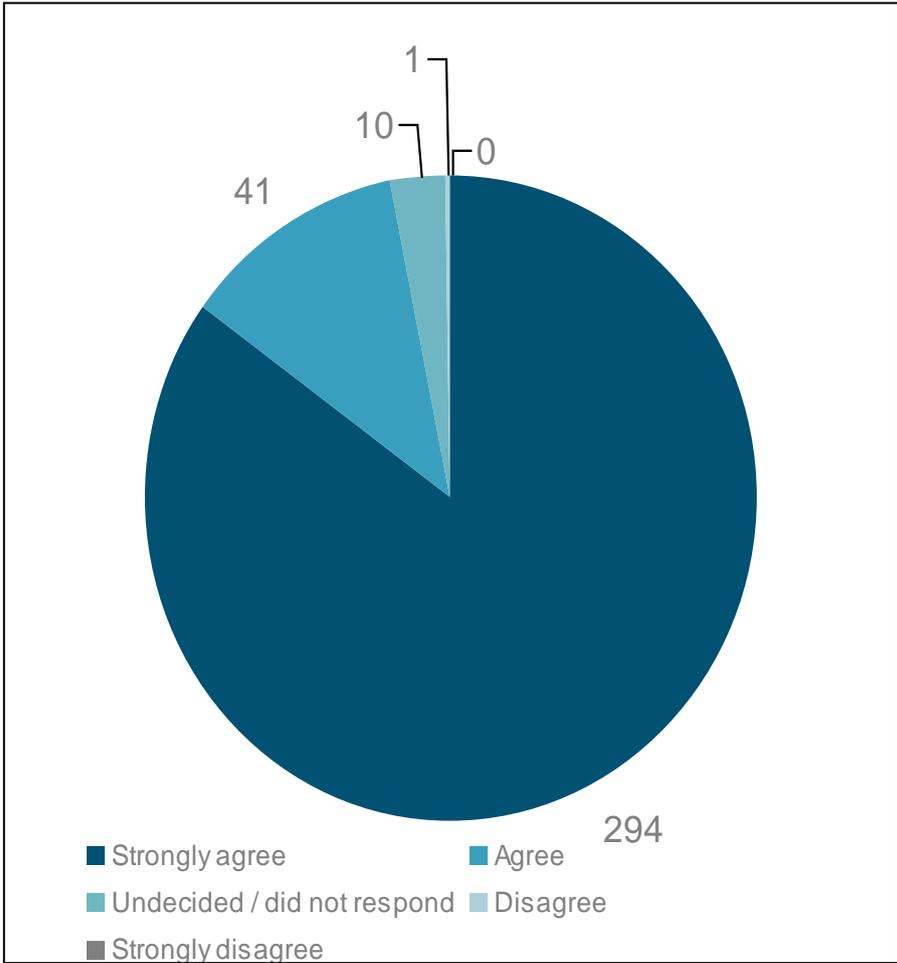
### **Comment cards**

As well as a ballot box to leave cards, a free post address was provided to make it as easy as possible for people to respond. The card had a blank space for comments to be written and three statements, which respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with.

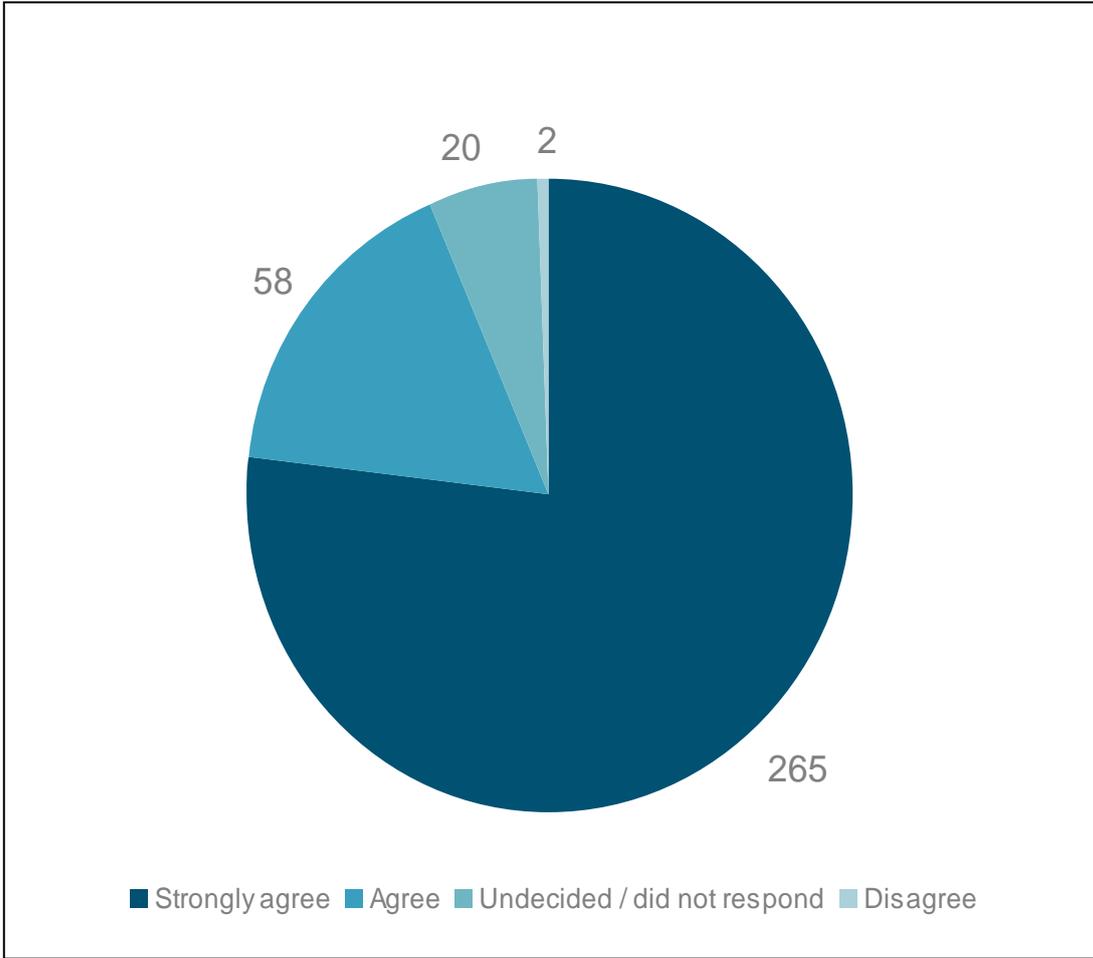
Where required, Network Rail will be responding to questions or points raised on the cards.

By 7 June, 351 cards had been received – which represents a very high percentage return (14%), based on those who stopped at the exhibition stand. In headline terms:

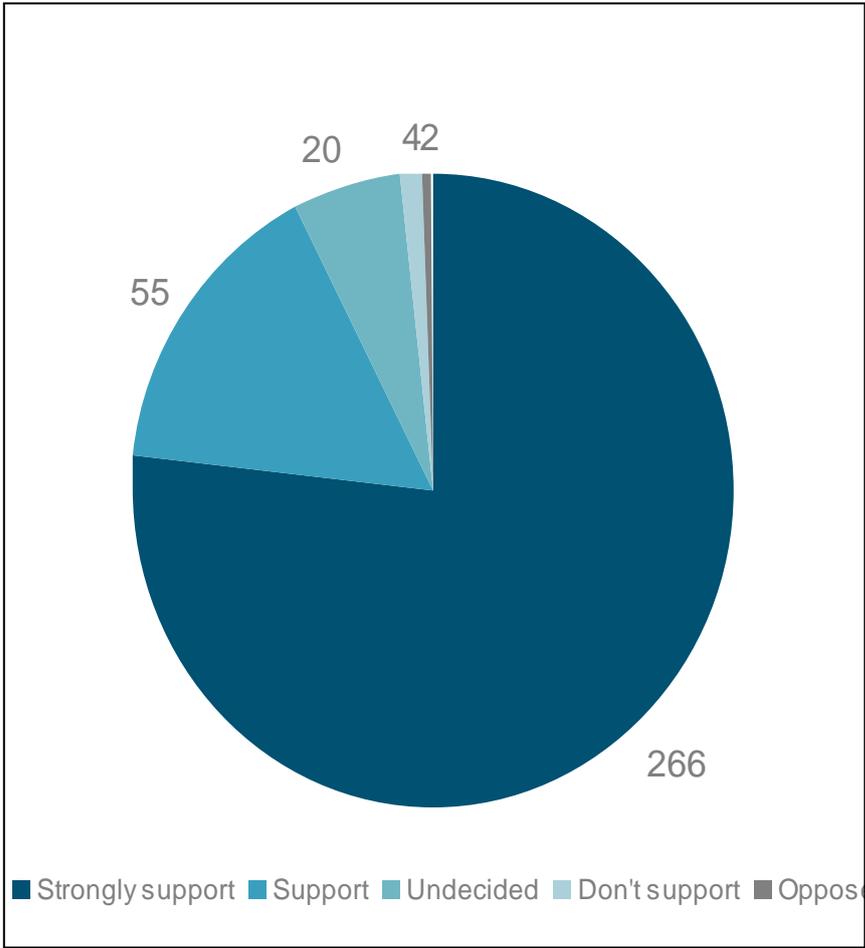
- 97% of respondents strongly agree or agree that London Bridge station is in need of investment (85% of respondents strongly agreed, 12% agreed).
- 94% strongly agree or agree that the proposals would benefit passengers and the local area (77% strongly agree, 17% agree).
- 93% strongly support or support with Network Rail's proposals (77% strongly support, 16% support).



Graph showing responses to question 'Do you agree that London Bridge station is in need of investment?'



Graph showing responses to question 'Do you agree that an improved station will benefit passengers and the local area?'

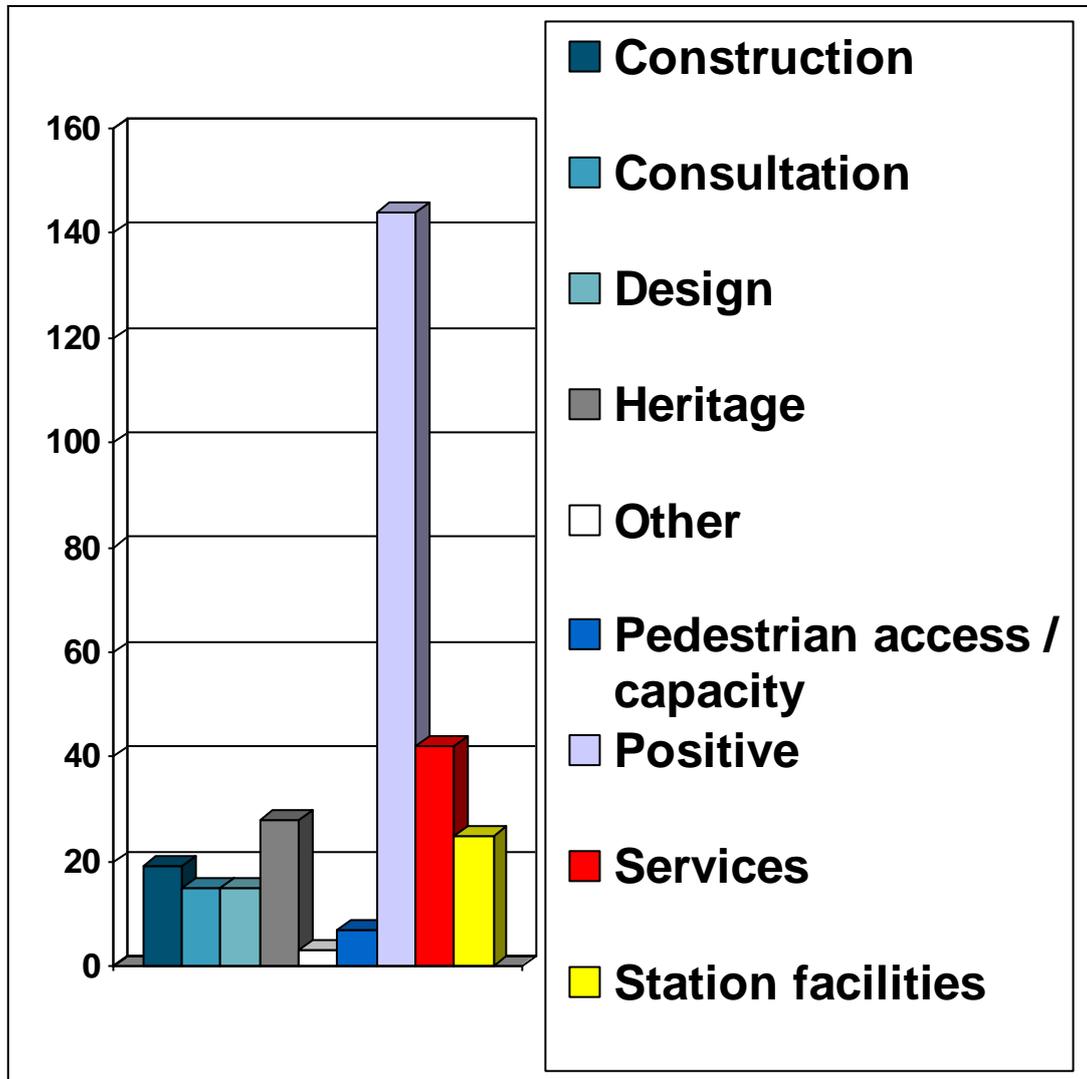


Graph showing responses to the question 'Do you support our plan to make the station bigger, and ease congestion?'

Of the 351 comment cards, 310 included written responses. These responses can broadly be broken down into the following themes.

- Construction – how the scheme will be built, timescales etc
- Consultation – remarks about the exhibition, comment card and information provided
- Design – for example, relating to station layout or the urban realm
- Heritage – concern over the removal of the old train shed roof and / or 84 Tooley Street
- Other – small number of comments, not covered by other categories
- Pedestrian access and capacity – comments or questions over ways into and out of the station, or overcrowding within it
- Positive – remarks welcoming the proposals
- Services – comments on current or future train services and proposals
- Station facilities – observations about current and future requirements, for example toilet provision

The bar graph below, represents the relative number of responses in each category. Far and away the single most common category of response (some 45%) were those welcoming the proposals.



Graph showing comment card responses by category

## **Positive comments – 143 of 351 responses**

As the chart shows, by far the single biggest set of responses, were those welcoming the proposals and describing support. Examples of comments include:

- Fantastic and much needed!
- A long overdue investment! Well done.
- Imaginative, exciting and suitable as a main hub for London city. Should be beneficial to business, development and employment in Southwark.
- Fantastic for Southwark
- They look terrific. Please press ahead at full speed.
- A huge improvement which should assist in the regeneration of the area.
- I think they sound great - I hate commuting through London Bridge as it's currently too busy, stressful and cramped. These plans are long overdue and can't come soon enough.
- Southwark local authority will be foolish to ignore this improvement to many people's quality of life.
- Excellent scheme - modern clean, lots of natural light. A station London can be proud of!
- I fully support the new plans that will bring the station into the 21st century. I like the ground level concourse and the dual Tooley Street / St Thomas Street entrances. Removing the South Eastern Railway building is a good idea - the space is needed.
- Brilliant improvement to a very dated and dull station which is in need of a very big facelift. Bring it on.
- Long overdue and very exciting. Shame it can't be completed sooner than 2018
- A very impressive design to modernise London Bridge.

## **Services – 42 comments**

The second biggest primary issue for respondents was the potential effect of the work required on train services. Some concern was expressed about the future of South London Line services (which are being withdrawn in December 2012 following the introduction of phase two of the East London Overground services).

Network Rail, train operators, TfL and others are working together to understand in more detail what the work will mean for passengers and more information will be made public as soon as it is available. In general terms at times, fewer trains will stop at London Bridge and more use will be made of alternative London stations.

Examples of comments included:

- There is no information on what services will be affected during the works. Presumably hidden on purpose.
- I have some concerns about the disruption to train services while this long period of work is in progress
- Given the scale of the plans, would welcome more info. about impact on services / building work
- I would prefer to see investment on the network itself to ease congestion on the trains which is undoubtedly the biggest issue for passengers not busy terminus.

## Station facilities – 25 of 103 comments

Responses also asked about station facilities, especially toilets and seats. There was also mention of the units around the station – an issue that has been under discussion in some of the meetings with stakeholders detailed above.

- Please ensure there are proper toilet facilities. The present situation now over 11 years old is unacceptable
- Please can we have seats now, before redevelopment. Great to see that Thameslink 2000 is go!
- This opportunity must be used to breathe active retail units and restaurants etc. Under the viaducts of St Thomas Street to create an active and vibrant street and not any false fronts or inactive units. Much effort and thought must go into this to get my support.
- My main concern is that cycle parking (currently on platform 8) be retained within the station (it is a particularly safe location as well as convenient) - and preferably expanded to include more stands to which the bike frame can be locked!
- Existing cycle parking on platform 8 is isolated from the cycle network and hard to reach at peak times. New parking should be more accessible. The undercroft concourse should retain characteristic bridge vaults.

## Heritage – 28 comments

The future of some of the historic fabric of the station has been another issue raised more in meetings than in general responses that have been received. However, less than 10% of responses were primarily concerned with this issue. Examples of comments included:

- I will be sad to see the train shed and curtain walls go but understand the reason why. I only hope the remaining undercroft arches are treated with care and put to good uses.
- I support it all in principle but not the demolition of the grade II listed roof. Please think again.
- I'm concerned at the loss of the historical arches on Tooley Street and I've read that the Southern Railway Building is to be demolished. This should NOT happen.
- It is a great shame that none of the listed existing roof over the platforms has been retained in the proposed design. I trust it will be carefully dismantled and made available to any organisation who will make good use of it.
- I support the plans but oppose the demolition of the South Eastern railway building on Tooley Street.
- Be big and brave. Knock the station down and start again. It is of no architectural value. Think big. We'll all put up with the disruption for the long term benefits. Thameslink demands you give it the opportunity to succeed and flourish. The whole area needs smartening up.

## **Construction – 19 comments**

- Proposal is good. But please try to minimise congestion on roads and through buses during the construction period.
- Are you able to start/finish the project any sooner? With all the building work we'd thought you'd started already! Designs look great I'm concerned about disruption to services due to works though.
- Sounds great. Will you be able to assure regular users of the station that disruption over the building period will be kept to a minimum. IE will LB station still be operational from 2013 - 2018?

## **Consultation – 15 comments**

Amongst the other issues raised on the comment cards, some responses focused on the consultation itself – the information available and the nature of the questions asked. Example comments included:

- So that was 3 'no brainers' but the devil is in the detail. How do I get some detailed plans?
- How could anyone disagree with these questions as phrased! Having a wonderful terminus will not help if bottlenecks further down the line prevent a decent peak time service arriving at LB. I travel cattle class on the E.Grinstead link.
- Perhaps a more detailed exhibition later this year
- Need more info. Need proper detailed plan of the upper concourse. Timetable of works. Any news on a new Sainsbury?

## **Design – 28 comments**

Distinct to the provision of station facilities such as seats, were comments relating to the design of the station and associated links.

- It's good to see the original brickwork retained but don't like the curved rook of the modern glazing - An architectural folly! Hope they provide decent toilets - not before time
- I do not like the empty, huge concourse which looks soulless. Needs to have more character.
- Plant trees on all the streets/green it up!
- On the whole supportive of the project. One element that should be revised is the Tooley sty side which is bland and unimaginative. The Victorian railway offices should be incorporated in the development

## **Pedestrian access – 7 comments**

Seven comments referenced congestion and passenger movement around the station:

- Main objective should be the stations capacity and increasing the ease of passenger movement.
- I am very concerned about pedestrian access from London Bridge as I gather that the walkway / bridge over Tooley Street for pedestrians will be lost in the new plans. Having to cross busy Tooley Street will be less convenient and dangerous.

## **7 Conclusion**

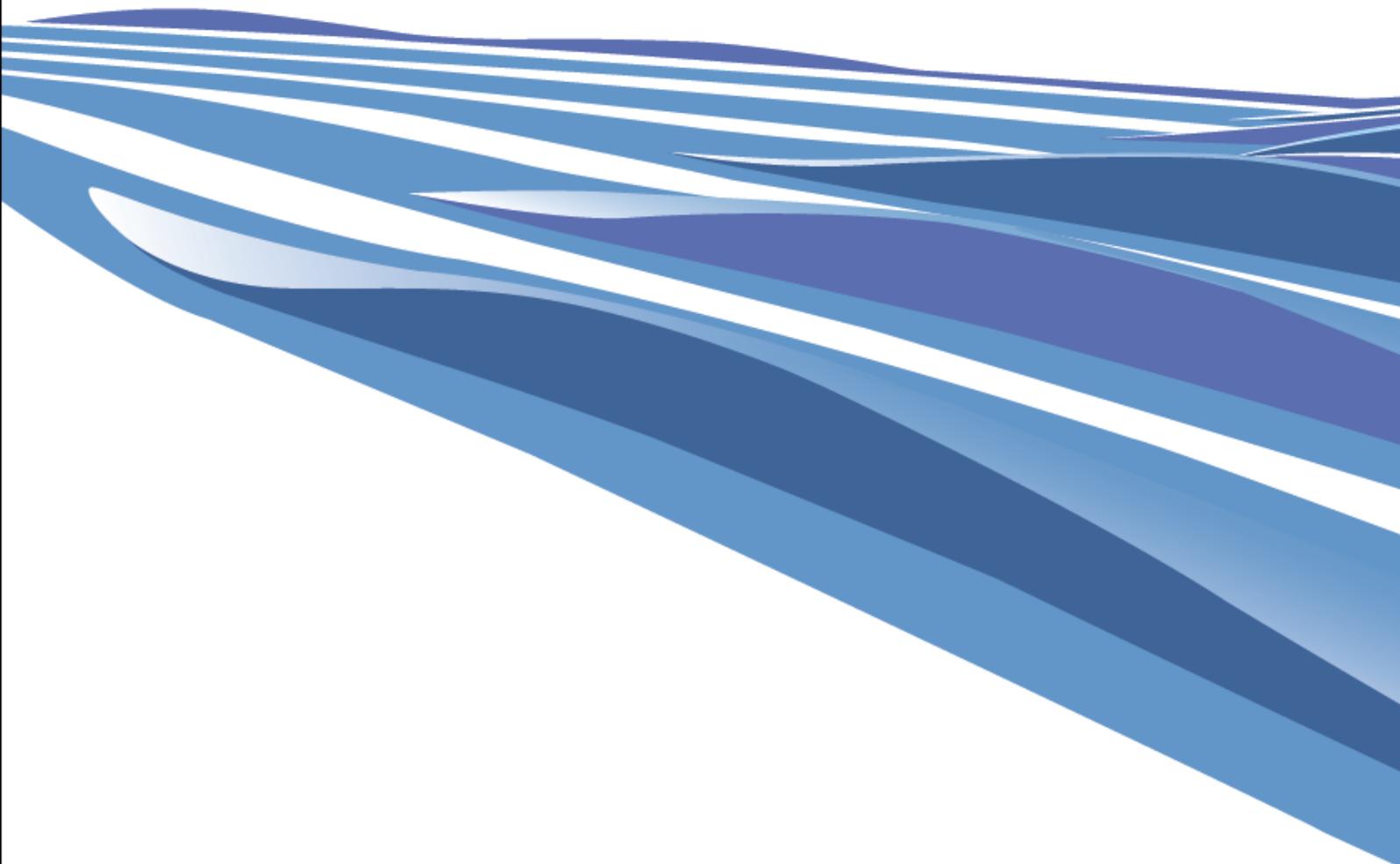
Based on the comment cards received and the meetings with some of the stakeholders outlined in the report, it is clear that there is an overwhelming appetite for London Bridge station to be improved and a huge level of support for Network Rail's plans.

It is worth restating that 97% of respondents strongly agree or agree that London Bridge station is in need of investment and, more specifically, that 93% strongly support or support Network Rail's proposals to transform the station. When asked for their thoughts on the plans, respondents are overwhelmingly positive and welcoming of the proposals.

Less than 10% of responses were primarily concerned with the heritage of the station. Some of the responses in this category regretted or opposed the loss of the listed train shed roof and 84 Tooley Street. Although not proposals that Network Rail makes lightly, we believe there is a strong justification for removing the roof and 84 Tooley Street.

Issues that have been raised that will need further consideration as plans are developed in more detail primarily relate to construction strategy and the clear communication of information on the effect on train services. Thought should also be given to how some of the issues raised relating to current station facilities could be addressed in advance of the main station redevelopment.

As the project develops, Network Rail will seek to build on the engagement we have undertaken pre-application and to work closely with everybody and every organisation with an interest in the transformation of the station.



GRIMSHAW

