URBAN CONGESTION INQUIRY

Following my appearance before the Transport Select Committee on 29 March 2017, I committed to following up a number of points. Please find my response below.

Response on Olympics Travel Planning

The Olympic Travel Planning programme was delivered by TfL on behalf of the Olympic Delivery Authority. As such the information requested is not readily available within the Department, especially given the time that has elapsed since the Olympic Games. However, a Parliamentary Research Paper provides some salient points on the delivery of the Games:

http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN03722

More detailed information could be provided to the Committee by TfL.

Funding for Tram Schemes

We treat all requests for funding for large locally promoted schemes on their merits and assess them against the same criteria. It is for the relevant local authority or Local Enterprise Partnership to make the case for a scheme and bid for government funding if they cannot fund the scheme from other sources.

Light rail schemes are expensive and need to be fully justified, particularly the passenger forecasts. However, our recent record of funding for such schemes shows that it is not unduly difficult for the case to be made. The fact that we continue to invest in light rail schemes demonstrates very clearly that we believe they help to improve the competitiveness of a local economy, as
well as providing a service for passengers that is fast, flexible and comfortable. Given the high costs involved, it is likely that any further schemes would be funded through our Local Large Majors Fund.

Hard barriers and cycle lanes

Safety, and perception of safety, is known to be a barrier to people taking up cycling. Providing safe, dedicated routes, such as kerb-segregated lanes, can encourage people to cycle who would not otherwise.

It is possible for local authorities to provide cycle lanes that are not kerb-segregated, and operate only at certain times. However, peak hour is the same for cyclists as for motor traffic, and cycle lanes that did not operate at peak hours could remove provision for cyclists at exactly the time they need it most.

Provision of cycle facilities is for local authorities, which is Transport for London in the case of the East-West Cycle Superhighway. I understand that traffic counts carried out by TfL in November 2016 showed that roughly 3,000-3,500 cyclists are using the Embankment route during the morning and evening peaks every day, and that is likely to grow.

ANDREW JONES