

London Mayor visits East Yorkshire factory but warns future contracts at risk

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The Mayor of London has visited the Siemens Mobility facility in Goole, East Yorkshire, where half of the 94 new Piccadilly line tube trains are due to be built, and got an exclusive first look at the final mock-up. The much-needed new trains, which passengers will see on the Piccadilly line from 2025, will improve frequency, reliability and capacity on the line, replacing the previous 1970s-built fleet.

Fifty per cent of the new train fleet will be built in the Siemens Mobility factory in Goole, employing up to 700 people in engineering and manufacturing roles, 250 in construction and 1,700 in the broader supply chain. TfL's contract has been a key catalyst for Siemens Mobility to progress their multi-million-pound investment in the facility in Goole, creating thousands of UK jobs – a prime example of just how important investment in TfL is to jobs and the UK's economy as a whole.

While visiting the factory the Mayor will warn that future TfL contracts which support so many jobs at the factory are at risk, without the Government agreeing a long-term capital funding deal with TfL.

TfL's supply chain stretches around the country and London has a strong relationship with regional suppliers like Siemens Mobility in Goole – with 55p in every pound invested in improving London

Underground being spent outside of London.

The Tube has seen a transformation over the last two decades and its continued modernisation forms a key part of the Mayor's Transport Strategy to make London a greener, more affordable, more accessible place.

The state-of-the-art Tube trains will significantly improve the Piccadilly line by boosting its capacity by ten per cent, being greener and more reliable.

Sustainability is at the forefront of the design and they are the greenest train TfL have ever run on the network. 95 per cent of the train materials are reusable and the trains also offer regenerative braking capability, cutting-edge traction systems, LED lighting throughout and advanced energy management. This means energy consumption is reduced by 20 per cent compared with the existing fleet.

The Mayor has ambitions to rapidly expand the order book, not just for new trains, but for new, cleaner buses too, creating more highly skilled manufacturing jobs – but to continue projects like this, he says TfL needs a sustainable long-term capital funding deal from government. Earlier this month, the Mayor visited Ballymena to highlight jobs at risk making new buses for London in Northern Ireland due to funding uncertainty.

TfL has time limited options built into its contract with Siemens Mobility to build new Bakerloo, Central and Waterloo & City line trains in the future, with sufficient funding these options could be activated, providing ongoing work for this important Yorkshire manufacturing base and its supply chain. However, under a managed decline scenario, the date for new trains for the Bakerloo and Central line would be pushed back to the late 2030s /early 2040s.

The Mayor has been clear that “levelling up’ the rest of the country cannot mean ‘levelling down’ London by not providing enough funding to its transport network. London's transport network is the backbone of the city – without it, there can be no London recovery, and without a London recovery, there can be no national recovery.

The mayor's office says that already, tough decisions on future projects have had to be made due to the economic impact of the pandemic, including putting the Bakerloo line extension on pause. In a managed decline scenario, the Bakerloo Line Extension along the Old Kent Road towards Lewisham would become undeliverable for at least a decade.

The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said: “Visiting this Yorkshire factory and the state-of-the-art Piccadilly Line trains being built, it is clear how strong London's relationships with our regional suppliers are – demonstrating just how vital skills and expertise around the country is to London's success and how investment in TfL is vital to jobs and a UK wide recovery.

“Without sufficient capital investment in TfL, future contracts with regional suppliers are at risk. The best way to secure these highly skilled jobs into the future is for ministers to break the continuous cycle of short-term funding deals handed to TfL which only holds back London and the rest of the country from innovation, jobs and economic growth.

“When London succeeds, the country succeeds and vice versa. This week the Government has the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to levelling up and deliver the capital funding TfL and its supply chain need – without it, both London and the wider country will be held back.”

Stuart Harvey, TfL’s Chief Capital Officer, said: “It’s fantastic to see the progress towards introducing desperately needed, modern and reliable trains on the Piccadilly line. They will bring additional capacity, air-conditioning, walk-through carriages and improved accessibility, as well as boosting reliability and energy efficiency.

“Goole is a vitally important site for the UK as it recovers from the pandemic, supporting hundreds of jobs and thousands in the wider supply chain, showing just how important it is to invest in transport. Sustained long-term investment in TfL would enable us to introduce more modern trains over time to replace other ageing fleets alongside new signalling – improving the journeys of millions more customers, reducing the costs of running the Tube and supporting hundreds more jobs in Goole and beyond in the years to come.

“I’m proud of the teams at TfL and Siemens who have kept this project on track despite the pandemic and look forward to seeing these new trains on the transport network in the not too distant future.”

Andrew Percy, Member of Parliament for Brigg and Goole said: “It is great to welcome the Mayor of London to Goole where he will be able to feel the real buzz the Siemens development is generating in Goole. It also demonstrates the interconnectivity of investment decisions across the country.

“Investing in London’s transport system is not only of benefit to Londoners and those who visit and do business in our capital city, it is also supporting thousands of jobs across the North and bringing hundreds of millions of pounds of investment to Goole. It is levelling-up in action.

Londoners will be able to travel on the Piccadilly Line safe in the knowledge that their train was built by the finest folk in the finest part of the North of England!”

Sambit Banerjee, Managing Director, Rolling Stock & Customer Services, Siemens Mobility Limited said: “We’re very proud to be building London’s newest tube trains right here in Yorkshire.

“The investment in the new Piccadilly line trains is helping us establish Goole as a centre of excellence for UK rail, creating up to 700 new jobs, including local apprentices and graduate trainees, and growing our large UK supply chain.

“We also want to build the next generation of Britain’s mainline trains here in Yorkshire, alongside new Bakerloo, Central and Waterloo & City line trains, subject to funding being confirmed.”

Henri Murison, director of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, said: “Economic success is not a zero-sum game. We’re pleased to see the Mayor taking the time to come up north to see the ways in which we and London can work together to create jobs, catalyse investment and unlock growth. Genuine levelling up in action.

“The chance to create a rail manufacturing ecosystem in Goole is testament the leadership role the north

can play in the UK's economy. Our expertise in manufacturing and innovation is helping to decarbonise the transport sector and bring us closer to net zero, while the City of London accelerates the UK's internationally competitive financial services sector

"Public and private investment is pouring in from across the country and creating huge opportunities in Goole.

"New tube trains for TfL are being made by Siemens Mobility, unlocking the town's rail R&D capability with the University of Birmingham, while building a pipeline of skilled workers through engineering programmes in primary schools and advanced vocational learning."

Photo credit: Transport for London