

Caroline Pidgeon
London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

18 July 2012

Dear Caroline,

CLOSURE OF THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE BETWEEN HAYS GALLERIA AND LONDON BRIDGE STATION

I refer to your letter dated 16th July 2012 and note your concern regarding the closure of the skywalk bridge link from London Bridge Station.

The closure of the escalators is as a result of a failure of a major component on the up escalator which was identified by our Client's insurers during a statutory inspection on 2nd July. Notice was then served advising that the escalator should be taken out of operation until such time as this defect had been remedied, re-inspected by the insurance engineer and a Report of Thorough Examination issued.

Upon receipt of the Notice, the escalator was taken out of use immediately. Whilst the timing is unfortunate, we are working hard with our consultants and the Contractor to ensure that the works are completed as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the required replacement part, a large 'sprocket', has to be manufactured especially and we are pushing for this to be done as soon as possible. The Contractor has now advised that they will be back on site this Thursday, 19th July and that the estimated completion date for the repairs is now 31st July which will involve working weekends as well as weekdays. We have enquired as to the possibility of working overnight but have been advised against doing this due to the complex nature of the works and the need to have the same team of engineers working on the instruction.

Regarding the possibility of using the escalators as fixed stairs. We would refer you to the Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed) "Guidelines for the safe operation of escalators and moving walks" (Issue 1 – Dated 24th May 2011), 4.13.1 "Use of stationary escalators as staircases" which quotes specifically BS EN 115-1: 2008 and recommends "escalators should not be used as regular staircases". As such we do not consider it safe to pursue this option.

Once the works are underway, access to both escalators at the bridge link level will be blocked off with components and lifting gear to enable the engineers to undertake the repair to the up escalator. No access at all will therefore be possible in any event at this time.

We trust that you find the above self-explanatory and we will keep you informed as to progress. It is our understanding that, during the Olympics, it is Network Rail's intention to close the skywalk bridge on certain

days from 1.00 pm to assist with crowd control. We are liaising with our contacts at Network Rail regarding further closures of the skywalk bridge to ensure that, if this occurs, suitable signage is displayed as appropriate.

In addition Network Rail did close this entrance for the entire day of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee River Pageant on Sunday, 3rd June to assist with crowd control within the station. Please be assured we will endeavour to have the escalators operational as soon as possible to minimise any disruption to the public during the Olympic Games.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jane Thompson". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

JANE THOMPSON
DIRECTOR – PROPERTY & ASSET MANAGEMENT