

Whitechapel Tube ticket office closure strike threat

A transport union says it will take any action necessary - including strike action - to prevent the closure of a London Underground ticket office.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport Union is concerned Whitechapel ticket office will close when it is rebuilt as part of the Crossrail project.

It says Transport for London's (TfL) plans could "open the floodgates" to more ticket office closures.

TfL said it was still in discussion with staff about any changes.

The union said the plans "totally ignore" the fact the station serves a diverse population in an area which includes a busy market and a major hospital.

In 2011, a leaked document from TfL showed that it was considering closing all but 30 ticket offices.

'Best use of space'

The station is undergoing works which will see the current ticket office demolished.

TfL will open a temporary ticket hall in July 2014 which will not have a ticket office.

Gareth Powell, director of strategy and service development for London Underground, said: "Where we are redeveloping a station we seek to make the best possible use of space, and in some cases this could mean redeveloping a station with increased ticketing technology rather than a replacement ticket office.

"Our plans for Whitechapel, which will increase station capacity with the arrival of Crossrail and enable us to improve accessibility by providing another lift in the ticket hall area, were shared with trade unions last year.

"We will continue to discuss changes to ticketing technology on the railway and the huge modernisation of the Tube with our staff."

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