

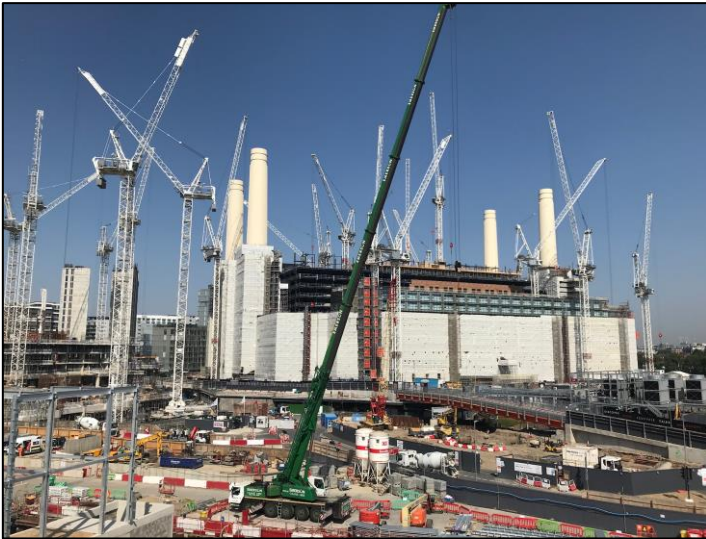
BATTERSEA NLE SITE VISIT

by Richard Clowser

(All photographs taken by the author)

On what turned out to be the hottest July day in Britain ever recorded, on 25 July I, along with four other Northern Line train operators met at Vauxhall station at 09.30 to visit the construction site of the NLE (Northern Line Extension) station at Battersea Power station. (In the absence of further information at the current time, the tracks will be designated as westbound (towards Battersea) and eastbound (from Battersea)).

We were met by a TfL project manager and then went to the site by bus. After signing in we were kitted out in hi-vis clothing, hard hat, gloves and glasses. We met one of the contractor's project managers who first took us up to a viewing platform. This gave an overview of the whole development site including the station box. While the station is due to open in September 2021, construction of the area is due to carry on until the 2030s. The station box itself will also be built over as well.



The area adjacent to the new station which gives an idea of just how massive the whole development project is.

The overview of the station box itself. Any construction seen rising now will ultimately be covered over by further development.

We then headed down into the station itself, down one of the two stairwells that are at either end of the platforms and will be used for emergency access only. We saw the void where a triple bank of escalators will go leading from one of the station entrances.



This shows the station entrance that will open first. You can see behind the yellow hoardings where the escalators will be.

The escalator well. You can see where the cladding has been installed already above where the escalators will be.

Once down at platform level, we walked onto the tracks and the crossover, immediately east of the station. All of the track, including the current rails, has been laid and sits on a concrete base, with pads to absorb noise and vibration. We walked up to the start of the eastbound running tunnel and could see that it's a much larger diameter than the conventional tube tunnel with space for a walkway adjacent to the track.

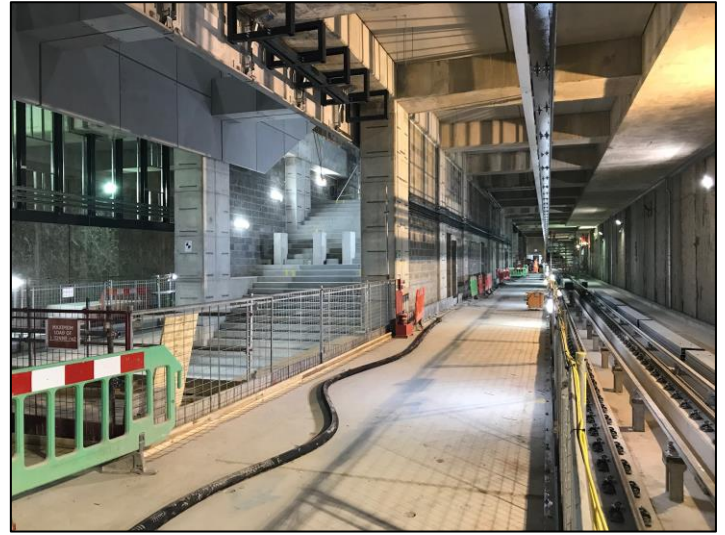
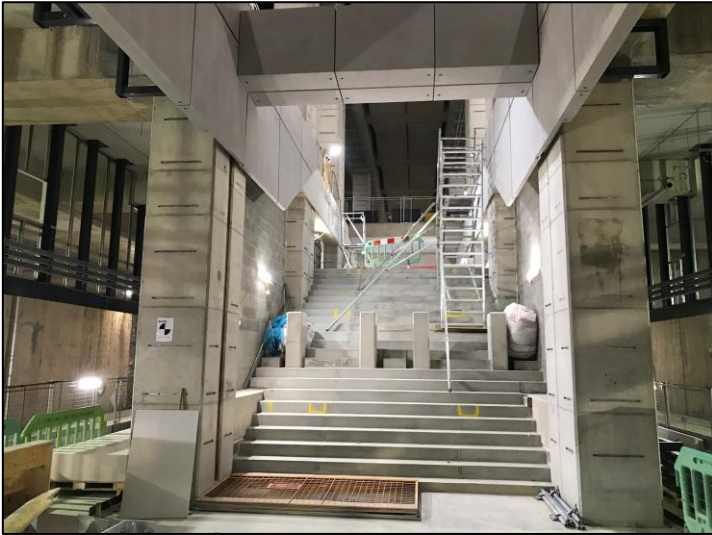


The track immediately beyond the 'eastbound' platform (Above) and the diamond crossover east of the station (Below).

Looking back into the 'eastbound' platform (Above) and the eastbound tunnel (Below), showing the extra space to the right for an emergency walkway.

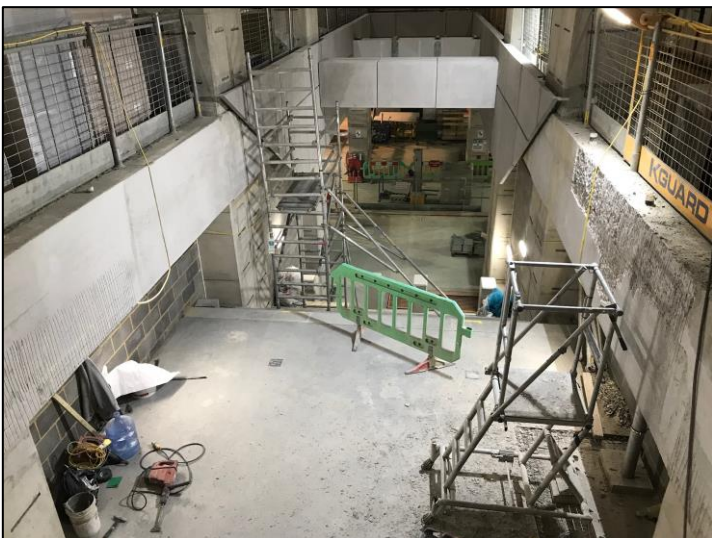
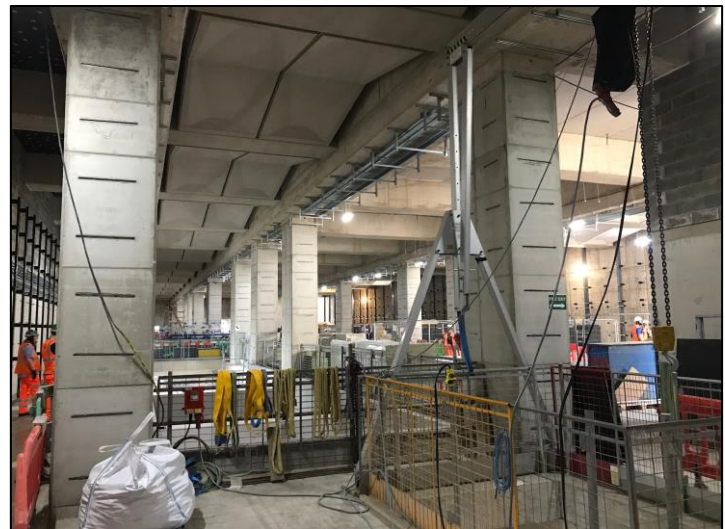
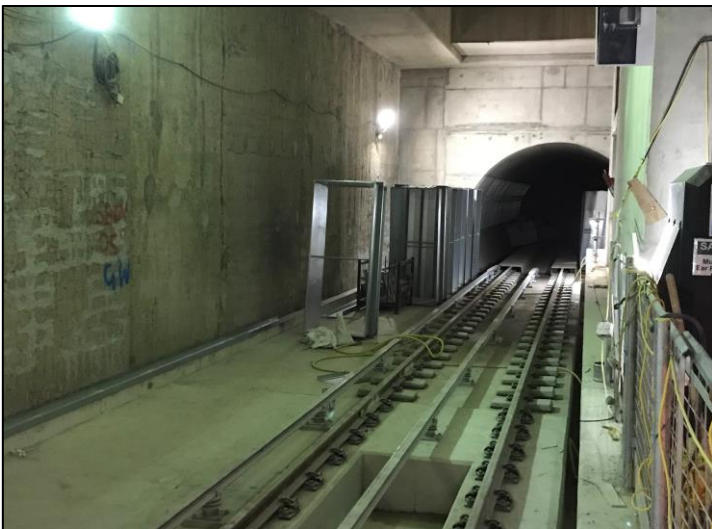


We then headed back onto what would be the eastbound platform if it were a through station and saw some of the service areas under construction. This included the step back office, toilets and tea points. There will be two banks of three escalators leading from the platforms as well as four lifts. The contractor explained that the surface cladding to the escalator well has to be completed before the escalators are fitted.



The 'eastbound' platform (Above). The framework above the platform edge is part of the fire protection required in the build. The overrun tunnel at the west end of the platforms (Below). These extend some 30 meters beyond the end. Looking down the on to the platforms where the escalators will be. (Bottom).

One of the sites where a bank of three escalators will be (Above) and the finished cladding done in advance of the rest of the station. The ticket hall area (Below). The gate line will be between the columns on the right. A section of escalator being delivered through the entrance that will open after the station initially opens (Bottom).





Left: A section of escalator unwrapped and ready for installation.

We then went upstairs to the ticket hall area. Some of the roof cladding in the central area has been completed. The contractor pointed out where the gate line will be and where the ticket machines will be. Provision is also being made for some retail units there too.

Initially, the station will have one entrance open, the other will be completed but screened off until development around the station is completed. Down the escalator void, a section of one of the escalators was being rolled down a slide by the workmen to join other sections already delivered. We then saw some of the backstage areas including the booking office, operations room, kitchen, mess room and locker rooms. We were told that the station could accommodate up to 150 train operators if it ultimately becomes a depot. All of these areas still require a fit out, but we were told that the whitewashed breeze block walls in some of the rooms are in their finished state!

We then returned to the site office and the heat, after what was a very interesting and informative visit and gave thanks to our hosts.