



12th August 2019

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Dear Michael,

Application for Directions: Proposed 39th Supplemental Agreement to the Track Access Contract between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited ("Network Rail") and First Greater Western Limited ("GWR"):  
GWR Response to the Office of Rail and Road ("ORR") regarding Network Rail's Letter of 25th July to the ORR.

Thank you for sight of Network Rail's letter and for seeking our views.

## 1. Network Rail Does Not Support the Rejected Trains in Appendix A

The Dec 19 GWR Priority Date Statement reflected the PMO guidance for the December 2019 timetable. GWR was instructed by the Secretary of State to provide a PDNS consistent with the PMO's guidance. A copy of the Secretary of State's letter (and the PMO Letter) is provided herewith for the ORR only.

Train planners at GWR and Network Rail have worked closely to develop the December 2019 timetable taking into account the changing timescales for delivery of key projects including Crossrail and GW Electrification.

The train paths offered on 4 June constitute the proposed 38th Supplemental to be submitted jointly by Network Rail and GWR to the ORR, having been approved by the NR SOAR panel on 22 June.

Trains rejected on 4 June upon publication of the New Working Timetable are listed in the Appendix A to Network Rail's letter to the ORR of 25 July. Since the New Working Timetable was issued we are pleased that nearly all the fifty or so train paths, have now been offered and published for December 19 PCD implementation, as a result of extensive work between GWR and Network Rail, including liaison with other passenger and freight operators.

Network Rail's Appendix A is herewith annotated to show trains now offered.

## 2. Network Rail Does Not Support the Proposal for an Additional Train Per Hour Reading - Gatwick Airport.

I attach herewith for the ORR only a copy of a recent letter from GWR to Network Rail which acts as a resume of the discussions so far and of the current position with respect to additional North Downs services.

The Secretary of State has instructed GWR to bid for the three trains per hour service using Class 165 timings on the Priority Date on Friday 9 August. This reflects PMO advice to the Department. A copy for the ORR only of the Secretary of State's letter is herewith.

The Secretary of State has last week agreed funding for the level crossings work, to supplement monies available from the local LEP and Gatwick Airport.

### 2a: Effect of Gatwick Project on Signaller Numbers.

The Possession Strategy Notice for the Gatwick Project which commences in May 2020 requires and reserves space for the additional train per hour to Gatwick Airport. If signaller numbers need to increase then surely these are funded through the existing Schedule 4 Supplement and through the Fixed Charge Wash-Up which for the additional Reading - Gatwick service is around £1m per annum.

### 2b: Performance Modelling.

Network Rail has undertaken a significant amount of performance modelling of the potential impact of the 3<sup>rd</sup> train per hour using RailSys.

Whilst there are limitations to this modelling (it considers only normal operations rather than perturbed running, and the timetable is only a concept rather than a fully validated operational quality timetable), it is Network Rail's recognised and approved modelling tool and does provide a useful indication of the impact of proposed timetable on performance.

The central scenario which was examined (3tph for Class 16X rolling stock) showed an improvement in late running for most EF09 services (EF09 is the Reading - Redhill / Gatwick Airport GWR service group) against current services. Based on these results, a forecast prepared by Network Rail Western's performance team showed an overall improvement in PPM for EF09 of 3%. This needs to be set in the context of overall improvements of 1.3% PPM over the last 13 periods on the route due better reliability of rolling stock and a recovery of temporary speed restrictions on the route.

GWR has carried out its own detailed analysis of the relationship between performance of North Downs services (EF09) and GTR services using performance data supplied by Network Rail for the last 13 periods. Over this period EF09 services caused an average of 0.11% of total delay minutes affecting GTR services. For PPM and On-time metrics, poor periods on North Downs (EF09) do not correspond with poor periods for GTR. Indeed, statistical analysis was not able to establish a relationship between EF09 PPM and delays caused to GTR, which shows that when North Downs services are disrupted, this disruption is effectively contained within the service group and does not propagate to GTR.

The above analysis, along with the work by Network Rail which forecasted an improvement in EF09 PPM; means there is no evidence to suggest this proposal would impact negatively on GTR performance.

The additional services are consistent with Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process, being assumed within the baseline of the Wessex Route Study (2015) which demonstrated that the service fits with all known aspirations at key Guildford and Reading nodes. Indeed Network Rail is confident enough to be selling land at Guildford at one time considered to hold a potential additional platform for London services.

However, there are also further mitigations being progressed to ensure a punctual service:

- The higher through service frequency enables services to terminate and start short at Redhill to recover the working timetable where necessary;
- Increase in the departure speeds at Reading Southern Platforms from 15mph to 30mph (no change to SRTs);
- Infrastructure mitigations, such as increased access to mitigation the impact of soil moisture deficit on the Wessex route;
- Contingency plans being agreed with the Wessex and South East Routes prior to each timetable change;
- Regulation statements have been agreed at Wokingham and Guildford, with the South East Route regulation policy currently being developed;
- An additional controller is going into Basingstoke ROC to help improve management of GWR train services. This position is expected to be in place in the next three months and will monitor and control services on the North Downs route as a priority, ensuring that trains are regulated correctly and contingency plans implemented consistently;
- Driver and Guard recruitment in connection with the extra service;
- Consideration of tanking facilities at Redhill and other initiatives to improve the reliability of on train toilets (thus reducing the need to swap sets and have toilet stops at Guildford); and
- Seeking to spend circa £200k on additional waiting facilities at Crowthorne, Blackwater, Farnborough North and North Camp. This will reduce dwell times at stations by encouraging passengers to use the full length of the platform.

I should be very grateful if you would help arrange for this to be considered please.

Yours sincerely



Robert Holder  
Network Access Manager