

FRW&W 4th Supplemental – Response to NR Comments.

Thank you for your assessment of the above application.

The appendix detailing the modifications made to the paths, using the December 2025 Timetable as the base, is most welcome and shows the potential viability of the scheme from an operating point of view.

We are very keen that neither the TfW plan for additional services between Cardiff and Bristol nor the plan for additional Oxford-Bristol services is affected by these small number of additional trains and, we will be working with your Strategic Planning team, as those plan details become available, to ensure this does not happen.

The Network is not constrained by the granting of rights for our proposed Hereford services. Future services, should they prove “better use” can always take precedence, subject to the correct application of part J of the Network Code.

The shunting arrangements at Hereford were not outlined in detail and we wish to work through the exact sequence of movements with your team as part of the taking forward of the project. We notice that terminating trains from the south can shunt across from 3 to either 1 or 2 via 47 signal (there is at least one daily move that does this) and we anticipate that this would be our preferred method of work.

We note the position regarding level crossings and would be willing to fund some of the minor work but most of the outlined future work seems not to be triggered by this application and we would stress that although we are sympathetic, we cannot fund a considerable amount of upgrade work that should, rightfully, be covered by the usual renewal funding processes.

The question of access during the Old Oak Common work will be resolved by the usual Capacity Plan process for the disruptive possessions and line blocks.

Hitachi Rail Europe has informed us that there is space at North Pole for maintaining and stabling the one additional unit this service requires, and it is intended this unit (in common with the Carmarthen fleet) will be fitted with both ETCS and ATP.

The exact maintenance plan for this unit is a matter for Hitachi Rail Europe and finalising their maintenance windows with the ECS opportunities (to match their Depot Rules at North Pole) is a task that can be done, once the passenger paths have been finalised.

The need for diversionary route knowledge is recognised as this is also a matter that concerns our Carmarthen services. We are also aware that contingency plans need to be updated if this service is approved.

Apart from turning round at Hereford and Paddington, no “on network” stabling is envisaged during normal service periods.

We look forward to working with you to bring this scheme to a successful implementation and are very grateful for all your work in helping to get it to this stage.

(signed)

Andy Wylie

Head of Regulation and Open Access Contracts, FG Rail