

Ian Biggar
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Dear Ian

Siemens Velaro Novo Maintenance requirements

When I wrote to you on 15 August with an update to Gemini's business plan for Lille stops, I mentioned that I would continue to provide updates on any developments as they arose. This reflects the Gemini team's continued work on mobilising Uber-branded trains from Stratford International, which has been gathering pace long beyond our 18 July submission to you.

We will shortly be making a public announcement of our partnership with Siemens Mobility and Rock Rail, which we have already set out for you in earlier letters. This sits alongside our existing brand partnership with Uber, which will bring a globally recognised mobility name to the Channel Tunnel route.

Gemini has an overt policy of forging partnerships with blue-chip organisations, driven by our compelling and well-differentiated business case - which has garnered broad support. From the outset, Gemini has been a full and highly expert team rather than being single-office consultant-led.

We are now delighted to confirm that the Gemini fleet will consist of new Siemens Velaro Novo trains, which we hope could be built in the UK, at Goole. Siemens have work to do within their own organisation to be able to confirm this production location, but if we can achieve a UK-built fleet, these will be the fastest trains yet built in Britain.

This letter accompanies a document prepared for us by Siemens, which outlines the Velaro Novo's maintenance requirements at Temple Mills depot. I am sending two versions of the document, as Siemens have asked that you only use the redacted version if publishing. The Siemens maintenance summary should be read in conjunction with our submission of 18 July.

There are some key messages that we believe are central to the strength of Gemini's very impressive rolling stock plans:

1. Siemens Mobility has broad and deep experience in high-speed rail, as a world-class rolling stock manufacturer with a reputation for demanding technical standards and very high-quality products.
2. The Velaro Novo is specifically designed for the requirements of our operating environment, with three simple adaptations required to meet Channel Tunnel requirements. A newly built fleet can accommodate these requirements in the design phase. Siemens' understanding of the technicalities of these features is already assured.
3. The maintenance requirements of the Velaro Novo are less demanding than the existing Velaro. The Velaro Novo has seven cars instead of eight, reducing bogie maintenance requirements. The weight reduction and technical improvements further reduce wear.
4. Siemens' understanding of the maintenance requirements of a Channel Tunnel fleet is based on the organisation's current position at Temple Mills Depot. Since 2013, Siemens staff have been based at the depot for the maintenance of Eurostar's Velaro e320s. Their knowledge of the depot and its operations is unique among manufacturers. Their report states: ***"The depot capacity for supporting Gemini's fleet requirements of one 400m maintenance road and two stabling locations accommodating a total of 6x200m sets on site is completely achievable without impacting the current maintenance or operational activities of the existing Eurostar fleet."***
5. In addition, Siemens confirm that there would be no impact from Gemini's fleet on the current stores, office or welfare facilities at Temple Mills. We are aware that the incumbent has cited these types of facilities as being potentially impacted and Siemens' report confirms no difficulties.
6. Siemens have made their own assessment in parallel with the IPEX report, which concurs with it. They further confirm that the Gemini Velaro Novo fleet can use the ancillary equipment at Temple Mills with little or no modification and with no reason for detriment to Eurostar's operations.

I hope you will find Siemens' report as useful as we did. It conclusively demonstrates that Gemini's new fleet will fit within Temple Mills and explains our plans for maintenance there.

Our choice of Siemens allies Gemini with one of the most impressive names in rail. Their appreciation of the operation of an international fleet is first rate and is based on present-day experience: uniquely among OEMs, this includes experience today of operating out of Temple Mills. Gemini's partnership with Siemens vastly reduces our mobilisation risk and means that Gemini's fleet proposal must surely be viewed as significantly the lowest risk among any of the Section 17 applicants.

As before, please could you let me know if you wish to publish this letter as parts of it may need to be redacted. Also as before, please don't hesitate to get in touch with any follow-up questions and we will respond with all speed.

Yours sincerely

