



OFFICE OF RAIL AND ROAD

**Graham Richards**

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Alasdair Couper-Johnston  
Network Rail  
The Cottons Centre, Cottons Lane  
London Bridge  
London  
SE1 2QG

Dear Alasdair

**Wessex Route Study**

I am writing to confirm that following consideration of the Wessex Route Study that you submitted to us on 25 August 2015, the Office of Rail and Road has concluded that there are no issues which are sufficiently material for us to issue a notice of objection.

We welcome the establishment of this Wessex Route Study, which represents the culmination of a substantial amount of work by yourselves and stakeholders. As the study itself notes, the assumptions made in this and any other long term planning documents have the potential to be impacted by the reviews currently underway, in particular the Hendy review. We do not consider that this should hold up the establishment of the Wessex Route Study. We do expect that, once the outcome of the Hendy review is known, Network Rail will assess whether there are any material impacts on this study as a consequence and communicate these with its stakeholders.

On 27 March 2015 we published our policy on "Third Rail DC Electrification Systems". We expect the electrification study to review the impact of this study on the electrical systems in order to accommodate growth on this and other routes.

We received some late concerns from Borough of Poole regarding the study on 20 October 2015, which we have treated as an objection. We have reviewed these and we do not believe the concerns raised materially affect the conclusions of the route study such that objecting to establishment would be appropriate. We have written separately to the Borough of Poole on this point and welcome your suggestion to us that you contact them on this matter.

I am copying this letter to members of the Rail Industry Planning Group and am placing a copy on our website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Richards', written in a cursive style.

**Graham Richards**