

Simon Moore
Network Development Manager
Chiltern Railways
Banbury Control Centre
Merton Street
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6th October 2017

Dear Simon,

London Midland proposed 5th Supplemental Agreement – Kenilworth new service

Many thanks for your letter of 9th August 2017 in relation to London Midland's application for access rights for a new service between Coventry and Leamington Spa, to serve the new station at Kenilworth.

I note that in your letter of 9th August you acknowledge the value and importance of introducing the Kenilworth services, and state that Chiltern Railways is supportive of the new station and the introduction of the new service in principle, and this is welcomed; nonetheless you also raise a number of challenges and concerns which I hope to address here.

Firstly, with regards to your comment about the discrepancy between the timings shown in the Form P and those formally offered by Network Rail, the timings shown in the Form P were illustrative timings taken from the performance modelling exercise and were copied from an earlier application to SoAR, the purpose of which was to illustrate how the shuttle service *could* work and therefore that sufficient capacity was available to support the associated access rights. Unfortunately with hindsight this may have been somewhat misleading as these timings were subsequently tweaked during the train planning process (primarily to adjust the timings of the shuttle service to make way for conflicts with CrossCountry, Chiltern Railways and freight services), so the final paths offered by Network Rail for December 2017 have some slight differences compared to the timetable originally modelled in Railsys and shown in the Form P. However, if anything the initial conflicts that were reduced through the iterative timetable planning process should actually reduce the overall performance impact, rather than to worsen it.

With regards to your comment about turnaround times at Coventry and Leamington Spa, as we stated at the meeting on the 25th September these have been planned with a minimum 5 minutes for passenger to passenger service workings, which we believe is compliant with the Timetable Planning Rules, and the paths have been validated by Network Rail.

With regards to turnarounds at Coventry, you also raise a specific concern regarding the arrival and shunting of a Class 153 unit to clear the platform ready for the next CrossCountry working, in that a late arrival of the shuttle service from Kenilworth leaves less time for the CrossCountry service following behind. If it can be of comfort then London Midland and Network Rail have agreed a robust method of working for communication between the Driver and Signaller, and the disposal of

passenger services at Coventry and the corresponding ECS moves into the engineer's sidings. Also it should be noted that as the timings for December 2017 are based on Class 153 traction, then the shorter SRTs from the use of Class 172s (see below) will mean that in practice the turnarounds at either end of the route are likely to be longer.

With regards to the performance modelling undertaken, you expressed a concern that because the boundary of the RailSys modelling only extended as far as Aynho Jn, that the potential additional delays to Chiltern Railways into Marylebone had not been adequately assessed. It is worth noting that the performance modelling for the proposed Kenilworth service has undergone a number of iterations since the first version, primarily to tweak the timings of the shuttle service to make way for other operators. The RailSys modelling was initially undertaken by Tracsis in 2012/13 based on a Dec 2012 base timetable, and updated in 2014 based on a Dec 2013 base. The modelling was then updated again more recently using a May 2016 base to reflect changes to CrossCountry timings (Reading-Birmingham New St journey time improvements), and Chiltern Railways timings (to reflect the introduction of their Bicester-Oxford timetable).

I note your concerns about the modelling and the discussions we had on the 25th September, and accept that RailSys modelling does have its limitations - particularly because it cannot fully replicate the decisions made by signallers during perturbation, yet it should be remembered that RailSys is essentially a simulation tool which enables comparisons between different timetables, but cannot quantify absolute predictions about performance. Its value in the exercise of modelling the impact of a radically new service change should therefore be limited to highlighting the potential performance risks rather than being seen as a prescriptive quantification of the actual performance impact, as it may both under and over-estimate performance risks in different areas. For this reason, once the key risks identified in the RailSys modelling had been highlighted, the aim of the operational workshops so far has moved towards focussing on and agreeing potential mitigation options.

Also, despite the limitations of the modelling I would contend that the amount of performance modelling undertaken for this service is probably over and above the amount normally conducted to support an access rights application, and at the cross-industry meeting on the 25th September you will recall that we discussed the performance modelling at length and agreed that we do not consider that undertaking any further performance modelling at this point in time would add any additional value to the process. We already have a clear idea of the risk areas so to conducting a further refinement to the modelling would add little extra value to the process.

With regards to your query about other mitigation options mentioned in the performance report, this included the possibility of turning the unit back at an alternative location other than within Coventry Station, to avoid the need for the shunt into the engineer's sidings. Alternative locations included a location on the Coventry-Nuneaton line (which would involve a crossing move across Coventry North Jn, likely to be challenging in train planning terms and also a greater performance risk), and also the possibility of turning back north of Coventry on the Down Slow line, which was also ruled out in operational terms. The other possible mitigation option was to link the proposed Leamington – Coventry shuttle with the existing Coventry – Nuneaton service. At the meeting on the 25th September, West Midlands Trains advised that whilst this was a long-term aspiration for Warwickshire County Council, the train planning implications were challenging due to conflicts on the WCML and so was unlikely to be realised in the short-term.

I note your concerns about the Network Change for the proposed infrastructure works at Kenilworth loop and at Milverton Jn which will support the service. The SRTs for December 2017 have been recalculated to take account of the shortened overlaps at Kenilworth, which assumes that these

interventions are commissioned in time for the start of service so it is important that this work is completed. Network Rail is confident that the works will be commissioned in time, and the Network Rail sponsor for this scheme advised at the LNW Route Investment Review Group meeting on the 29th September that the Network Change should be circulated for external consultation within the next week.

Finally with regards to your challenges about rolling stock, you will recall that at the meeting on the 25th September, West Midlands Trains Ltd (who will take over the operation of the West Midlands franchise from 10th December) confirmed that the Kenilworth shuttle service would be operated by a Class 172 unit rather than a Class 153, as had been previously assumed (at the time of commencing the access rights application it was not possible to confirm the traction type due to the bid process for the West Midlands franchise still being underway). The Class 172 provides a material improvement over a Class 153 in terms of acceleration and braking, potentially offering a 3 minute journey time saving between Coventry and Leamington Spa. As the paths for December 2017 have been offered by Network Rail using Class 153 SRTs then this is likely to offer a material performance mitigation benefit through the operation of Class 172s in Class 153 paths. As a 2 or 3 car Class 172 unit (to be confirmed) the longer unit, compared to a 153, will also go some way to resolving your concern about crowding and a potential shortfall in train capacity.

I hope that this letter can give you some additional comfort with regards to this application.

Yours sincerely

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

James Carter
Network Access Manager