

MAYOR OF LONDON

Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP

Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Date: 30 NOV 2015

Dear Patrick

East Anglia Rail Passenger Franchise ITT – STAR scheme 4tph

I am disappointed to be writing to you again about this issue. After my letter to you on 14 October, we welcomed the Department for Transport's (DfT's) initiative to host a round table meeting on 11 November with an expert neutral chair. The chair's view, based on the evidence, was that the DfT should urgently review its position on whether it is possible to provide 4tph at both Angel Road and Northumberland Park. Despite this, and others both within and outside the Department who have good reason to believe it would be possible, the responsible team in the Rail Executive appears unwilling to look again at this crucial decision.

I would ask that you seek an urgent senior level review in an attempt to come to a resolution before Enfield's impending Judicial Review. DfT officials have confirmed that a timetable providing 4tph at both Angel Road and Northumberland Park is 'physically possible' without taking stopping trains from other stations and that it would fall within established timetabling rules. Network Rail has also confirmed its long-held view that a 4tph timetable could be implemented.

We have been discussing this scheme for several years with DfT representatives. We were reassured by the DfT in July this year that a regular 4tph service at both Angel Road and Northumberland Park would be specified in the ITT. We have also been led to believe that it was in fact specified in the draft ITT until 24 hours before it was published; so we are mystified as to why it was not included.

Frustratingly, there is also a fall-back option which officials also appear to be refusing to consider. Reducing train frequency at Brimsdown from 5tph to 4tph in the AM peak would allow 4tph at Angel Road and Northumberland Park and ensure there is no detrimental impact on service performance, which we know is a concern of the Department. There are only 2tph in the PM peak at Brimsdown, so the AM peak is over-provisioned and both the London Boroughs of Enfield and Haringey would support this option if it would help to resolve the issue.

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In the longer-term, I am sure we can all agree that four-tracking would be a way to dramatically improve services along this corridor. But four-tracking is not feasible until 2024 at the earliest and Enfield and Haringey are reliant on 4tph considerably sooner than that to make their housing developments possible. For example, a 4tph service is an essential precondition for Enfield's selection in January 2016 of a development partner for its £2.5bn Meridian Water development scheme.

This approach of transport infrastructure enabling housing growth is very different from the old "predict and provide", based on simply catering for existing demand. New railway infrastructure has unique potential when used in this way to trigger housing growth, but certainty of an enhanced service is required, before new passengers create higher demand, for the developments at Angel Road and Northumberland Park to go forward.

The DfT must become more attuned to this way of thinking if the Government is to get anywhere near meeting its housing targets. At immediate risk are 8,000 homes, 3,000 jobs and £80m stamp duty for the Treasury at Meridian Water and 3,700 homes and 1,000 jobs at Northumberland Park. Together they form a significant chunk of housing and jobs growth within the Upper Lee Valley Opportunity Area Planning Framework which identifies potential for 20,000 new homes and 15,000 new jobs. Plans for Meridian Water are at an advanced stage but any delay or reduction in development capacity would undermine investor confidence there and in the wider area. This would frustrate delivery of new homes and jobs and tarnish London and the UK's international reputation.

Considerable effort and investment has already gone into supporting the STAR scheme which will be wasted if a regular 4tph service cannot be achieved. You agreed to the DfT £6m contribution recognising the impact it could have on housing growth. The London Enterprise Panel, TfL, Network Rail, LB Haringey and LB Enfield have all also invested in the scheme to a total of £52.1m. Coupled with LB Enfield's investment of £70m in Meridian Water to date, this is a considerable sum of public money that hangs on resolving this issue.

I do hope that we can come to a solution on this, for the benefit of all parties, before the court hearing in December. For this to happen, I believe further senior level review and fresh thinking is necessary.

Yours ever,



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London