



Department for Transport

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive
Transport Focus, Albany House
Ground floor west, 94-98 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EA

Peter Wilkinson
Managing Director
Passenger Services
Department for Transport
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Website: www.gov.uk/dft

1 June 2023

Via Email:

Dear Anthony,

Constructing the new Old Oak Common Station

Thank you for your letter of 19 May 2023, regarding the construction of the new station at Old Oak Common and its impact on rail passengers.

The new Old Oak Common (OOC) station will provide an interchange between rail services on the Great Western Main Line, the Elizabeth Line across London, and High Speed 2 connecting London initially with Birmingham. The station is vital for the opening of the High Speed 2 (HS2) Phase One, when it will serve as the temporary London terminus.

The construction of Old Oak Common station commenced in July 2021 and work on the eight new conventional railway platforms started in November 2022. To build a station of this size, a significant programme of On Network Works is required, including relocating the trackwork on the Great Western Main Line to align with the platforms of the new conventional railway. I recognise that this will undoubtedly cause significant inconvenience to passengers during the period of works. and our challenge as an industry is to ensure that existing services can continue to operate with as little disruption as possible whilst delivering the new station in line with the overall HS2 programme.

While the construction of the station is a crucial aspect of the HS2 programme, ensuring right mitigation measures are in place during the construction is a priority for the Government to minimise journey disruptions on a strategically important section of the UK rail network. We are working closely with Network Rail, Great Western Railway (GWR) and HS2 Limited to ensure the impact on passenger services is minimised. Our priority has been to minimise closing the railway, although some all line blocks (ALBs) will be inevitable, particularly to realign the trackwork. There will be a number of ALBs prior to the station's completion in 2030 and we are developing plans to terminate trains at Ealing Broadway and to divert some services to other central London terminus stations.

There will also be some two track operation when either the Main Lines or Relief Lines are closed with access being allocated for operation on the other lines. The challenge for the industry is to provide a balance of services that is meaningful for passengers and the freight industry. We are facilitating cross industry workshops to understand how

resources and services could operate flexibly during construction to ensure a meaningful passenger service offering. This includes developing customer-centric passenger handling strategies and a consistent communication plan to make travel process smoother and more transparent.

I would like to thank Transport Focus for bringing their concerns to my attention. The Department is actively engaged with your colleagues and can provide further updates as necessary.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Wilkinson", with a small flourish at the end.

PETER WILKINSON