

Sam Gibbins
Executive, Track Access
Office of Rail Regulation
One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

1 May 2007

Dear Sam

Response to the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company letter of 23 April regarding consultation responses

We refer to the above letter and the comments made relating to the Arriva Trains Wales response. We are disappointed but not surprised that WSMR have not actually used this opportunity to answer the points raised in our submission which reinforces our belief that the proposal is both operationally unworkable and without a sound business case.

ATW have in detail identified the commercial benefits which would flow in terms of ticket sale commission, car park income and station access, together with the disbenefits of revenue abstraction and the commercial impact of lower performance. Our calculations show a significant overall financial worsenment for ATW. WSMR have said nothing that would make us believe otherwise.

As we pointed out in our response, WSMR only mentioned to stakeholders the positive aspects of a new service to London, without discussing the implications to existing services. Far from being 'out of step' with our stakeholders we would be irresponsible if we did not highlight the existing services that may not be able to run, or would run less reliably. We understand the political position of the Welsh Assembly Government in support of a new link to London and we have always said that ATW in principle have no objection to the concept. It is the details of the proposal that are simply unworkable operationally and commercially abstractive. No re-assurance has been offered by WSMR to make us change that view and it would be wrong if we did not seek to protect existing services which are funded by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The proposed train paths ignore many other trains on the Network. This is a point which is mentioned by all the other train companies affected, with the notable but not unsurprising exception of Chiltern Railways who clearly have a conflict of interest. Again, no attempt has been made to explain how the numerous timetable conflicts and unacceptably tight performance margins between Marylebone and Wrexham will be addressed.

Sam Gibbins

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We trust that these significant issues will be properly addressed in ORR's determination of this section 17 application and that the improving performance trend across the affected train operators is not compromised.

Yours sincerely

Mike Bagshaw
Commercial Director