To: Planning Inspectorate, Gatwick Airport Limited Northern Runway DCO application

From: Nigel Searle MBE MILT ACIRO, GTR Strategic Planning

Approved: Phil Hutchinson, GTR Head of Strategic Planning

Date: 12th March 2024

Issue Specific Hearing 4 on Surface Access

Post Hearing Written Representation

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) is a train operator providing the train service on the Brighton Mainline between the South Coast, Gatwick Airport and London and beyond as contracted by the DfT. As a management contract GTR is paid to provide the train service and all the revenue collected from passengers is paid to the DfT on behalf of the Taxpayer. GTR Strategic Planning Team use our knowledge and experience to maximise benefit for future passengers of the rail network.

GTR and Gatwick Airport are key partners for transporting passengers between the London and Southeast regions of England and International destinations throughout the world.

GTR is supportive of expansion of Gatwick Airport expansion with a Northern Railway. However, it can only proceed if railway capacity is increased to accommodate the additional passengers.

Applicant's Transport Assessment

GTR disputes the applicant's statement and conclusion on Page 103 of Transport Assessment "There is generally standing on services in both directions between East Croydon and London Bridge and London Victoria in 2029 and 2032, in the future baseline and with Project scenarios. The travel time for this section of the route is within the 20-minute threshold that DfT use as guidance for acceptable standing, as long as the standing capacity is not exceeded." Implying there is no standing from Gatwick Airport and a false conclusion that "The rail crowding assessment indicates that no additional mitigation is required because of the Project."

At the hearing the applicant stated "we did use GTR data to validate the model", However, their baseline was 2016 a time when passenger growth was stalled due to reduced capacity into London Bridge that was being rebuilt for the Thameslink project.

GTR shared 2013 passenger census with advice to uplift. We also shared the 2019 passenger census when it became available which demonstrated how passenger demand had bounced after the implementation of the Thameslink Programme with Passengers in Excess of Seats (PIXS) extending into the off peak.

The GTR consultation response, 1st December 2021, we challenged the applicant's assertion that no additional mitigation was required

- demonstrating that morning peak pre-covid there was 4.2% Passengers in excess of Seats (PIXS) departing Gatwick Airport on fast line trains (30-40 minutes therefore unacceptable standing) that became severe standing north of East Croydon 10.9% towards Victoria and 22.5% towards London Bridge.
- Concluding that as a minimum the applicant should provide funding to help secure the Brighton Mainline Upgrade Programme (BMUP), especially the Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS)
- Advising to secure world class access to Gatwick Airport the applicant should work with investors to deliver a new railway as proposed to the DfT London and South Coast Corridor Study by GTR











Passenger Crowding

At the hearing GTR stated that demand had bounced back stronger than expected Autumn 2023 Passenger census midweek just 9% below pre pandemic, weekends 13% higher than pre pandemic. This has resulted in 16.3% PIXS morning peak from Gatwick Airport on fast line trains very severe north of East Croydon 20.2% on trains towards Victoria and 49.4% towards London Bridge, with a busy off peak hour typically having 1.6% PIXS departing Gatwick Airport all on Victoria trains increasing to 5.6% north of East Croydon although in the short term this could be eased if the pre-covid level of train service were funded and resourced.

The applicant stated, "We have a considerable amount of overall capacity on rail services coming through Gatwick and stopping at Gatwick", but omitted to say that capacity was fully utilised at busiest times peak, off peak and weekend, or that variability of demand results in standing even during hours when the average train loads do not have passengers in excess of seats.

For airport passengers with luggage a train is uncomfortable even when not all seats are taken because of the space taken up by luggage.

Below demonstrates the need for more capacity on the railway though Gatwick Airport

These are train loads at East Croydon of fast Gatwick Airport to London trains. OTA is the load arriving East Croydon i.e. load departing Gatwick Airport and OTD is the load departing East Croydon

Red indicates passengers in excess of seats, Orange indicates nearly full, which means some standing as trains do not load evenly and is difficult, stressful and uncomfortable for airport passengers with luggage.

The trains shown as pass in the departure time column are Gatwick Express trains which are the most lightly loaded trains for several reasons including not stopping at key stations like Clapham Junction.

				Average		05/09/2023		06/09/2023		07/09/2023		12/09/2023		13/09/2023		14/09/2023		19/09/2023		20/09/2023		21/09/2
Orig Location 🖪	Dest Location 💌	Arr 🔻	Dep ▼	OTA Lo 🔻 O	TD Lo ▼	OTA Lo 💌 OT	TD Lo ▼	OTA Lo 💌 C	OTD Lo 💌	OTA Lo 💌 C	OTD Lo 💌	OTA Lo 💌 C	TD Lo 💌 O	TA Lo 🔻 O	TD Lo 🔻 O		TD Lo 🔻 (OTA Lo 🔻 C	TD Lo 🔻 (TA Lo 🔻 O	TD Lo 💌	
lastings	London Victoria	08:18:00	08:19:00	397	590	335	505	389	576	378	502	357	524	345	438	324	506	429	626	343	496	332
Brighton	Bedford	08:21:00	08:21:00	1119	1439	1066	1351	999	1360	1064	1402	1079	1413	1145	1222	1061	1459	1452	1600	1026	1483	1200
Brighton	London Victoria		Pass		348	347	347	343	343	330	330	363	363	332	332	324	324	366	366	272	272	376
Bognor Regis	London Victoria	08:28:00	08:28:00	690	873	623	786	633	791	623	852	677	829	882	968	626	844	759	1124	983	1055	965
Brighton	Cambridge	08:31:00	08:31:00	647	933	669	987	577	1015	648	918	718	882	639	831	662	973	757	1187	635	998	
ittlehampton	London Victoria	08:42:00	08:43:00	565	751	489	890	650	984	517	682	529	512	498	527	576	931	598	820	522	749	864
astbourne	London Victoria	08:48:00	08:49:00	313	417	260	288	242	349	284	418	465	640	339	389	292	397	300	411	218	224	252
Brighton	Bedford	08:51:00	08:51:00	1153	1395	763	956	690	819	715	855	5852	6058	857	1524	845	1082	860	1052	805	902	1170
Brighton	London Victoria		Pass		238	236	236	220	220	215	215	292	292	254	254	233	233	245	245	203	203	322
Bognor Regis	London Victoria	08:58:00	08:58:00	352	579	382	528	242	450	447	638	269	534	381	688	343	486	373	568	276	514	489
Brighton	Cambridge	09:01:00	09:01:00	457	697	457	626	409	637	500	784	505	839	466	861	451	746	490	814	372	526	
ittlehampton	London Victoria	09:12:00	09:13:00	417	567	377	583	345	529	379	431	367	493	467	590	448	666	415	583	344	454	457
)re	London Victoria	09:18:00	09:19:00	305	381	242	298	304	399	294	371	256	300	330	396	320	393	293	390 -			305
Brighton	Bedford	09:21:00	09:21:00	639	841	437	916	487	555	454	674	438	473	533	630	533	642	561	678	495	906	937
Brighton	London Victoria		Pass		196	102	102	187	187	169	169	181	181	183	183	153	153	135	135	144	144	313
Bognor Regis	London Victoria	09:28:00	09:28:00	405	567	425	575	371	470	364	594	378	523	413	567	349	485	372	503	486	565	545
Irighton	Cambridge	09:31:00	09:31:00	983	1126	1021	1178	945	1094	937	1077	1078	1182	1026	1165	962	1073	1027	1190	1083	1239	
ittlehampton	London Victoria	09:41:00	09:42:00	482	577	485	608	407	617	452	482	478	591	412	569	456	631	415	581	478	555	688
astbourne	London Victoria	09:48:00			420	266	403	196	249	292	311	369	407	337	423	311	359	320	366	408	507	463
Brighton	Bedford	09:51:00			912	569	635	678	710	659	673	784	906	802	854	697	767			671 -		1357
Brighton	London Victoria		Pass		193	147	147	174	174	206	206	194	194	224	224	167	167	170	170	182	182	303
Bognor Regis	London Victoria	09:58:00		373	470	431	563	306	381	250	373	454	517	458	550	291	399	425	494	336	394	439
Brighton	Cambridge	10:01:00			476	403	500	337	427	401	451	387	455 -			379	467	372	482	355	417	
ittlehampton	London Victoria	10:11:00			463	403	505	321	367	275	336	333	385	418	491	374	455	340	438	456	507	499
Ore	London Victoria	10:18:00			331	225	267	228	273	287	341	200	233	259	308	297	403	236	284	309	367	209
Brighton	Bedford	10:21:00			581	515	607	395	482	504	564	468	484	646	758	475	448	489	572	524	570	737
Brighton	London Victoria	20.22.00	Pass		181	135	135	173	173	182	182	159	159	173	173	122	122	185	185	158	158	341
Bognor Regis	London Victoria	10:28:00		349	427	380	467	262	341	331	325	303	371	364	471	319	323	350	445	306	409	438
Brighton	Cambridge	10:31:00			421	307	372		341	444	518	409	445	322	371	438	522	345	409	300	343	
ittlehampton	London Victoria	10:41:00			584	521	668			453	538	484	552	569	658	521	561	484	455	466	554	529
astbourne	London Victoria	10:48:00	10:42:00		390	253	327	312	388	313	385	198	248	304	350	347	392	296	393	248	249	343
righton	Bedford	10:51:00			495	362	404	419	419	428	464	372	410	440	479	518	568	421	497	445	515	682
righton	London Victoria	10.51.00	Pass	433	238	194	194		413	297	297	161	161	182	182	337	337	193	193	207	207	282
ognor Regis	London Victoria	10:58:00		352	410	344	394	292	296	324	376	280	309	448	561	344	388	442	543	354	410	337
	Cambridge	11:01:00			405	314	340	327	372	339	409	371	397	424	525	320	416	333	402	253	329	252
righton)re	London Victoria	11:01:00			499	473	530	383	408	413	485	336	397	435	514	270	259	317	402	506	583	778
	Bedford	11:18:00			499		530	368	408	413	485	375	422	391	427	373	411	352	377	447	583 442 -	
righton	London Victoria	11:21:00	11:21:00 Pass	412	203	192	192	368 126	126			189		391 146	146		292	352 192	192			355
righton		11.20.00		205						245	245		189			292				138	138	
ognor Regis	London Victoria	11:28:00			365	334	375	281	323	303	390	253	358	341	431	280	428	245	244	253	261	419
irighton ittlehampton	Cambridge London Victoria	11:31:00 11:41:00			373 460	313 457	395 547	269 464	311 530	315 480	394 460	346 373	417 445	346 431	427 497	317 384	431 443	373	461	363 374	448 405	470











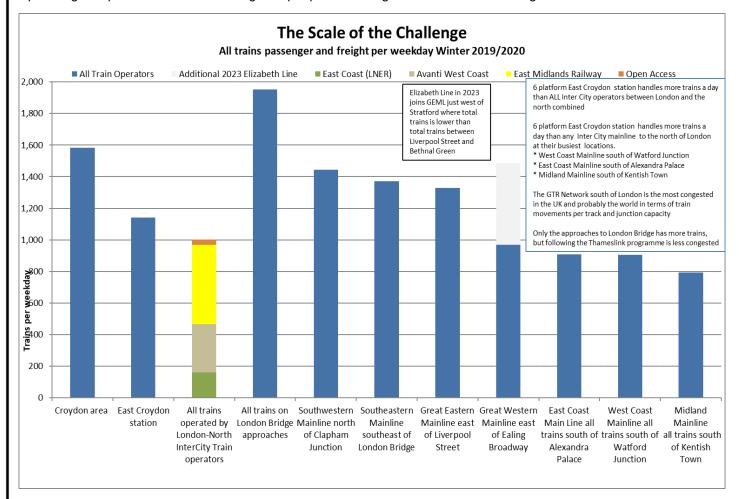
Track Capacity utilisation

As explained at the hearing, pre-pandemic the railway between Gatwick Airport and Central London was making the maximum robust use all available track capacity peak and off peak, and squeezing any additional trains would inevitably result in small delays causing widespread disruption. The Croydon area handles more trains than any other railway in the UK except the approaches to London Bridge, and East Croydon station handles more trains than the total of Inter City trains between London, the Midlands, North and Scotland to/from Euston, St Pancras and Kings Cross combined.

Subject to funding the pre-covid level of train service can operate which is 5 more paths in the busiest peak hour, and 2 more paths off peak paths and increasing 8 car trains to 12 car. However, growth will result in that level of train service being full by the 2030's with passenger journeys peak and off peak becoming more uncomfortable as demand continues to increase.

Without additional capacity, to accommodate the additional passengers some people will choose not to travel by train to Gatwick Airport e.g. may choose to travel by taxi, or use another airport.

Inevitably if Gatwick Airport funds road network expansion, while the railway remains capacity constrained, there will be modal shift away from rail to road making sustainable travel targets unattainable a trend made even worse as passenger expectations are increasing with people becoming less tolerant of travelling in discomfort.











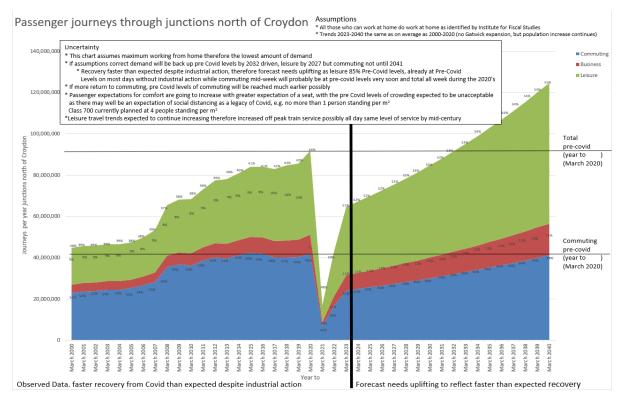


Future Growth

Growth driven by economic activity, population growth and airport growth has resulted in full track utilisation and crowded trains peak and off peak on the Brighton Mainline through Gatwick Airport to London. Although Covid set passenger demand back and has changed the way people work, passenger demand has bounced back faster than expected, and will continue to grow so that even without additional airport capacity, by mid century rail use will be far in excess of what the current Brighton Mainline can accommodate.

Even once the train service restored to pre-covid levels, the maximum the infrastructure can accommodate, growth by mid-century is expected to

- cause discomfort for passengers
- result in people choosing not to travel, or find a different way to travel
 - with more airport passengers using road to access the airport
- suppress economic growth.













Required to accommodate additional airport passengers:

- Increased rail capacity to accommodate additional air passengers.
- As a minimum, a reasonable proportionate contribution as Network Rail suggests towards increasing rail capacity to accommodate increase of airport passengers
- Gatwick Airport should
 - not treat this as a cost to get their DCO approved,
 - but consider it an investment to enable their customers to access air travel in reliable comfort.
 - Failure to invest will
 - undermine the viability of airport expansion,
 - condemn the travelling public to uncomfortable unreliable travelling conditions.
- Gatwick Airport should be as visionary about accessing the airport as they are about expansion and improving the airport.
- GTR contribution to the London and South Coast Corridor Study
 - demonstrated that even CARS and BMUP was not sufficient for the long term,
 - presented a visionary transformation for the BML and access to Gatwick Airport with a very strong business case.
 - Gatwick Airport 15 minutes from central London every 5 minutes
 - Gatwick Airport should look at this contribution "New London Gatwick Sussex Railway" and work to make this transformational surface access for Gatwick Airport become a reality.









