

From: John Halsall, Route Managing Director for Wessex



By e-mail: john.redwood.mp@parliament.uk

The Rt. Hon. John Redwood MP
Member of Parliament for Wokingham
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our Ref: ATJRCW001

15 June 2016

Dear Mr Redwood,

Improvement works at Wokingham station - Local information drop in session

As you may already be aware, Network Rail's Wessex Capacity Improvement Programme will increase capacity between London Waterloo and Reading station, as part of our five-year enhancement plan for 2014 to 2019. This will require carrying out upgrade work to lengthen platforms at stations on the line in order to accommodate new 10 car trains.

Improvement works will be carried out at Wokingham station to lengthen platform 1, install additional lighting and extensions to the public address system, as well as any associated works. We will be holding an information session on the works for your constituents **on Tuesday 21 June from 15.00 to 19.00 at Wokingham Station**; and we contacted local residents earlier this year to inform them of our intention to undertake these essential improvements and to invite them to the event. The works are scheduled to take place from July 2016 to December 2016.

The drop in session will be an excellent opportunity for your constituents to find out more about the project and how the work will improve services for them, as well as to ask any questions they may have. We will also be writing to Wokingham Borough Council to highlight the event and you, or a representative from your office, are very welcome to attend the session, if you would find that useful.

Safety is our number one priority and work of this type must be carried out while trains are not in operation. Under our licence conditions we are contractually obliged to work whenever possible, including during the night and at weekends. The equipment we will use for the works means there will unfortunately be some local disturbance near the railway. However, we will make every effort to minimise any unnecessary noise and those working on site are fully briefed on working responsibly in the local community. A dedicated Network Rail team is available to speak to people to discuss the improvements and hopefully residents will attend the drop in session at the station on 21 June to take the opportunity to speak to the project team about any concerns they may have.

My team and I, if we may, will update you with further details on the improvement works in the future. In the meantime, I hope this information is useful

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Halsall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

John Halsall
Route Managing Director for Wessex

Wessex Capacity Improvement Plan – the facts

London Waterloo is the UK's busiest railway station and the main station for one of the busiest railways in the UK. The number of passenger journeys has more than doubled in the last 20 years to 234 million per year, and further growth of 40% by 2043 is forecast.

This is the biggest investment for decades and will deliver a 30% increase in peak time capacity by 2019.

The majority of the station and infrastructure improvements are funded by the Department for Transport and as part of Network Rail's £40 billion Railway Upgrade Plan to deliver a bigger, better, more reliable railway for passengers. Investment is also being made in a fleet of 150 new train carriages to create extra capacity for South West Trains passengers.

When these improvements are complete, more trains than ever will arrive and leave London Waterloo every hour during the busiest times of the day – providing more space and better journeys for hundreds of thousands of passengers every day. These works will pave the way for improvements of longer distance routes into London Waterloo and long term digital railway systems required to meet the increasing demand for rail services projected.

The improvements at London Waterloo will be complemented by enhancements at Vauxhall and Surbiton stations to increase capacity and improve passenger journeys.

Breakdown of investment programme:

Creating a bigger and better London Waterloo

- Rebuilding the former Waterloo International Terminal, providing an extra five platforms (20-24) and a spacious, modern and accessible concourse
- Extending Platforms 1-4 to allow ten-car trains to run on London suburban services for the first time in the busiest hours
- Also includes improving passenger access to support increasing capacity at Surbiton and Vauxhall stations

Fleet of brand new trains, with improved facilities

- 150 carriages – with the first entering service in mid-2017. These will operate between London Waterloo and Windsor & Eton Riverside.
- Siemens-built Class 707 Desiro City Trains offer significantly improved passenger facilities including free WiFi, wider doors to make it easier to get on and off the train, air conditioning and improved passenger information
- Financed by Angel Trains
- Full introduction by middle of 2018 will allow a 'cascade' of trains to other routes, increasing capacity across the network
- Full rollout will take total number of carriages on the network to 1,599. Compared to just 1,022 in 1996

Upgrading trains to regenerate power when braking, reducing power consumption and reducing maintenance time

- Removal and replacement of the existing DC traction equipment, including the motors, on Class 455 units
- Replacement with modern three-phase AC traction equipment and solid state inverters with regenerative braking
- Reduces carbon emissions and expected to save £2 million per year in energy costs

Extending platforms at ten stations allowing longer trains with room for more passengers to run to Reading

- Requires platform extensions at ten stations: Ascot, Bracknell, Camberley, Chertsey, Egham, Feltham, Martins Heron, Sunningdale, Virginia Water, Wokingham
- Improvements to the electricity supply, including new substations, will provide more power for longer trains

Upgrades to maintenance facilities to handle UK's largest ever train fleet

- New workforce concept where operator and supplier bring skills together
- To provide berthing and maintenance for the network's largest ever train fleet – depots and stabling are already being significantly upgraded

New technology to improve punctuality and reduce impact on environment

- GreenSpeed Driver Advisory System collects real time data to calculate exact speed of train to improve punctuality.
- Also has the potential to reduce impact on the environment by lowering energy consumption

Timeline of events at London Waterloo

March 2016:	Construction work starts in the former Waterloo International Terminal, with minimal disruption to passengers using the station and no service alterations.
February 2017:	Platform 20 reopens for passenger services.
June – Aug 2017:	Weekend work, including some changes to weekend passenger services, to allow rail infrastructure to be installed.
August 2017:	Platforms 1-4 extended at London Waterloo. Due to the track layout, this will mean Platforms 1-9 will be closed for more than three weeks. Network Rail will reopen platforms 20-24 to help maintain passenger services but there will be significant changes to services. Detailed information on changes to services during this period will be advertised in advance to ensure passengers understand how this will affect their journeys.
Sept 2017 – Dec 2018:	Platforms 1-9 will reopen, with 21-24 closing to allow for the construction of the new passenger concourse and facilities.
December 2018:	New timetable introduced including use of all 24 platforms at London Waterloo.