



Department for
Transport

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

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Dear James

Thank you for your letter of 17 December 2009 to Andrew Adonis on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED] about the proposed dualling of the Swindon-Kemble railway line. I am replying as Minister responsible for Rail.

It is not possible at this stage to say how many more trains would pass through Minety if the Swindon – Kemble route were doubled. I can, however, give some indication of the likely future train service changes. These are:

Diverted Trains

When the main line between Bristol and South Wales is interrupted, the Swindon-Kemble offers an alternative route into South Wales via Gloucester. Currently the restrictive single track section to Kemble means local services may be withdrawn to enable diversion of long distance services. With track doubling, both long distance and local service would be expected to operate.

Extra trains – short term to 2016

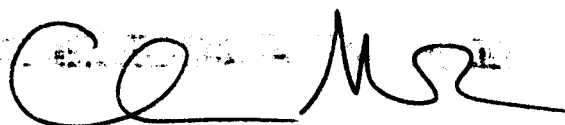
There are currently no plans to negotiate additional passenger trains from First Great Western (FGW) should the route be doubled. This will be reviewed when the franchise, which expires in April 2016, is re-let, or if demand grows faster than currently forecast. FGW and other passenger and freight train operators may operate additional services on a commercial basis should they wish.

Extra Trains – medium term from 2016

As passenger demand continues to grow, the need for additional capacity by way of extra services is likely to arise. The medium term demand forecasts and train operator expectations of service changes have been set out in the Network Rail (NR) Route Utilisation Strategy for the Great Western Main Line. This document is available from NR and can also be accessed on their website.

The latest position on funding is that the South West Region has indicated to the Department for Transport that it is minded to use part of its funding allocation towards the redoubling of the route by 2012. It proposes a limit of £45m and NR is working to determine if it considers itself able to deliver the improvement within that sum. A report on this work by NR is due shortly to be considered by the Department that, in conjunction with the Region, along with the timescales that NR feels confident to work within, to undertake construction work in the most safe and efficient manner.

Best wish



CHRIS MOLE