

Dear Inspector,

### Closing Submission from Michael Fish – OBJ 21

In my submitted briefs I raised a whole range of questions. During the enquiry I have received responses. I now bring these issues and responses together. My critical concern is the proposed closure of Watford Met Station to passenger traffic. I remain of the view that this should not be done. No substantive evidence has been given to justify the closure. Watford Met Station should remain open to passenger traffic.

London Travel Watch recommends the station remains open.

Watford's MP recommends the station remains open.

Watford's Mayor recommends the station remains open.

George Derbyshire the local representative recommends the station remains open.

The Croxley Rail Link peak hour service is 6tph. We've heard that the passenger demand south of Moor Park is for 10tph. To achieve this LUL propose to reverse 4tph at Rickmansworth. In my questioning of Mr Foley it transpired that the full logistics of reversing trains at Rickmansworth had not been thought through. I believe the sequential activities involved in the conflicting move from the Northbound Platform at Rickmansworth are as follows:

- > 'Passengers all change at the NB platform'
- > With all passengers off, the train is ready to proceed across the main line into the siding,
- > Signal cleared.
- > Train proceeds to siding
- > Close operational switches and securing the train,
- > Walk through the train to the south end cab,
- > Activate the driving equipment in SB cab,
- > Wait for the signal to clear,
- > Join the southbound main line and run into the platform  
pick up passengers

Mr Foley states the run time from Moor Park to Rickmansworth is 4 minutes and 4 minutes back giving 8 minutes of runtime plus a layover of 8/9 minutes at Rickmansworth. In total the round trip journey time is 16/17 minutes para 5.2.10 of CRL/3/2. He said the detail was still being worked out. I believe that when the detail is worked out and the full sequence of events as given above are taken into account the round trip time Moor Park to Rickmansworth and back will be nearer 19 minutes. The equivalent time from Moor Park to Watford Met and back is 20 minutes giving only a small difference. The claimed time benefits by reversing at Rickmansworth compared with Watford Met are not evident.

The conflicting move at Rickmansworth over the mainline 4 times an hour during the peak is fraught with problems that can have an adverse effect upon the smooth running of the service. For instance we heard from Mr Foley that during the leaf fall season the signal overlaps – that is the safe working

distance between trains is doubled. So any LUL or Chiltern Line train could be held north of Rickmansworth whilst the reversing move either into or out from the siding is taking place. This would greatly increase their run time into the station. Adhesion issues on the Met line are not trivial matters.

Therefore, reversing at Rickmansworth has logistic issues and operational issues and is not as simple as the evidence would have us believe.

Reversing at Watford has no unknowns. Watford Met is to be retained for off-peak and overnight stabling, as there is no space at Watford Junction.

Reversing is simple, straightforward and has the following benefits since the infrastructure, including signalling and communications have to be maintained for stabling:

- > Reversing takes place in the platform whilst station duties are performed.
- > Driver can use the toilet and make a cup of tea. Neither of these facilities is available in the siding at Rickmansworth. A toilet break at Rickmansworth would require another driver to take over or lead to a delay to service.
- > The safety and security of the live 600v dc 4-rail spur to Watford Met would remain as today and not require unspecified actions by the promoters as would be the case if the Station closes.

Similarly the operational issues of:

- > Rail adhesion – leaves on the track.
- > De-icing of the current rails – 600v positive and negative rails.
- > Snow clearance of the current rails.

Do not require special attention. However, if the Station closes to passenger traffic these would require the promised but unspecified and uncosted actions by the promoters.

We've been told that the equipment from Watford Met is to be re-assigned to Ascot Road to reduce capital costs. This includes, among other unspecified items, automatic gates and loudspeakers. Also that to commission Ascot Road Station whilst Watford Met Station is still open to passenger service that special arrangements will be made. Again the HOW this will be done wasn't addressed in any detail. It assumes:

- > Removal, packaging and protection of equipment has no cost.
- > That no equipment is damaged in removal. No item is chipped or bruised.
- > That not only it is fully functional at removal but also fully functional when fitted at the new site and requiring minimal calibration to bring it into service.
- > All items are to drawing and that no adjustment on site is needed
- > All fixing is negligible and that no making good is required.
- > That previously untried and untested circuits work perfectly when the re-located equipment is fitted. Maybe the plan is to use surrogate equipment that will involve – fit, test and disconnect. This is extra work and extra cost. It also ignores that more than one item is needed for the system to work e.g. loudspeakers. And what joy to test loudspeakers at night when the final fitting out takes place and then all the residents will complain about noise!

It is hard to believe the perceived financial benefits of this approach will be realised in practice. There is clear advantage in buying new and having the equipment ready to fit and test rather than incurring re-work costs and not knowing whether the systems work for sign-off inspection. There will be capital costs increases by keeping Watford Met open but these will largely be off set by the avoidance of other non added-value contractor work and costs.

There will be revenue costs in keeping the station open to passengers. But there will be fare box income. Also as London Travel Watch recommends 'Let's make the trial of the split service'

There is a compelling case to:

### **KEEP WATFORD MET OPEN**

It should be placed on record that the residents whose view will be impaired by the removal of trees along the Croxley Rail Line have been told at the enquiry that the tree canopy will be re-established. Re-establishing the tree canopy is not consistent with LUL's tree felling policy for the Metropolitan Line as is evident by the wholesale felling of trees along the Met Line.