

22 July 2020

Daniel Zeichner MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Zeichner,

Thank you for your letter to Andrew Haines of 7 July 2020 about the proposed carriage wash at Cambridge depot; I am responding as Route Director for Anglia. I know how strongly residents feel about the proposed wash and am sorry to see some remain concerned about the project.

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) is appointed by the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver the design and construction of the wash. Our role is to make sure that GTR's proposals don't pose a risk to the safe and reliable operation of the existing railway. As we're not the project leads, we can't take a decision to postpone the work ourselves.

However, I understand that GTR have chosen to pause construction of the carriage wash structure until the planning situation is further clarified. Following discussions between Cambridge City Council, GTR, the DfT and ourselves, it's been agreed that the best way forward is for an application of Prior Approval to be submitted.

Although the construction of the wash has been paused, GTR will continue with the rest of the depot project. This includes the construction of a connecting track and overhead wires under Mill Road Bridge between the north and south sidings, as well as the associated groundwork, drainage and piling work.

I understand that residents would have liked this facility to be located at Cambridge North (also referred to as Chesterton Sidings). We highlighted this land for potential commercial development in early 2010, and while some of this land was used for the construction of the new station, the remainder was sold to raise funds for enhancements elsewhere on our network in early 2016.

The decision to construct a carriage wash at Cambridge depot was made after this land was sold. For land to be sold, we have to apply for and be granted land disposal consent from the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). As part of this process key stakeholders including GTR, GA and the DfT were consulted and no objections were raised to this sale.

The proposed carriage wash is positioned near Cambridge station because it forms part of enhancements to the existing Cambridge Depot. This was originally part of the Thameslink Programme, which requires an increased and upgraded stabling and servicing facility to accommodate GTR's Class 700 trains. The need for this facility was further underpinned after Greater Anglia won the franchise in 2016 with the promise of new trains and improved services for Cambridge.

Both operators have since been clear on the need for a new carriage wash facility in the enhanced depot. Any wash must be located within an existing depot so that train movements through the facility can be accommodated within the timetable – moving trains to another part of the network simply to wash them would impact on performance and reliability.

I hope that this information helps you respond to your constituents. Thank you again for getting in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ellie Burrows', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ellie Burrows  
**Route Director – Anglia**