

**Louise Beilby**  
Senior Access Executive



10 October 2023

Felipe Brandao  
Franchise and Access Manager  
Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd  
1 Puddle Dock  
London  
EC4V 3DS

Darren Gay  
Track Access Contract Manager  
Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd  
1st Floor, 24 Monument Place  
London  
EC3R 8AJ

Dear Felipe and Darren

**Approval of the 55th supplemental agreement to the track access contract between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited and Govia Thameslink Railway Limited dated 2 March 2016**

We have today approved the above supplemental agreement submitted to us formally on 10 October 2023 under section 22 of the Railways Act 1993 (the Act). This follows an earlier informal submission of a draft agreement for our consideration. This letter explains the reasons for our decision.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this agreement is to extend one weekday service between East Croydon and Watford Junction to and from Hemel Hempstead. A further service from Watford Junction will be extended to start from Hemel Hempstead. Firm rights for all services are already in place between East Croydon and Watford Junction which are due to expire in May 2024. This application seeks firm rights to cover the extended portion of these services between Watford Junction and Hemel Hempstead, in both directions. The rights are to commence on the Principal Change Date 2023 and will expire on the Expiry Date or earlier termination of Govia Thameslink's track access contract.

**Industry consultation**

Network Rail undertook the usual industry consultation. No comments or queries were raised.



## **ORR review**

Our review of the application raised no operational, performance or economic concerns. We identified some minor drafting issues and these were resolved when the agreement was formally submitted.

## **Our duties under section 4 of the Act and our decision**

We have concluded that approval of this supplemental agreement strikes the appropriate balance in discharging our statutory duties under section 4 of the Act; in particular, those relating to protecting the interests of users of railway services (section 4(1)(a)), promoting the use of the railway network for the carriage of passengers (section 4(1)(b)) and enabling persons providing railway services to plan their businesses with a reasonable degree of assurance (section 4(1)(g)).

## **Conformed copy of the track access agreement**

Under clause 18.2.4 of the track access contract, Network Rail is required to produce a conformed copy, within 28 days of any amendment being made, and send copies to ORR and the Train Operator. Please send the conformed copy to me at ORR.

## **Public register and administration**

Electronic copies of this letter, the approval notice and the agreement will be sent to the Department for Transport and Network Rail's Policy and Access Team. Copies of the approval notice and the agreement will be placed on ORR's public register (website) and copies of this letter and the agreement will be placed on the ORR website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Beilby'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Louise Beilby**