

Jamie Burles
Managing Director
Abellio Greater Anglia Ltd
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London E20 1EJ

Our Ref:
Your Ref:

11th September 2015

Dear Jamie,

Roydon – proposed closure of ticket office under schedule 17 of the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this.

London TravelWatch wishes to formally object to this proposal on the following grounds that the;-

- numbers of ticket transactions between 0700 and 0930 Monday to Friday generally is above the 12 transactions per hour that the Secretary of State has set as the standard for which retention of ticket office facilities is required.
- consultation process was poorly handled and executed.
- mitigation measures that Abellio Greater Anglia publicly promised at the start of its 'public consultation process' are now not to be included in the proposal.
- station will not comply with the Railway Accident & Investigation Board (RAIB) recommendations for stations with platforms separated by a level crossing for a separate ticket vending machine on platform 2 (Cambridge bound).

Numbers of transactions and availability of fares and tickets

From the data that you supplied to us, it is clear that the busiest time of day is between 0700 and 0930 on most days of the week. Mondays are especially busy, with the sale of weekly season tickets. Given that the existing ticket vending machine is also used at this time, I find it difficult to accept that this machine will be able to cope with the additional demand that would be placed upon it, especially as the timing of trains in the morning peak is such that 'bunching' of passengers would occur rather than a constant stream.

London TravelWatch notes that the ticket vending machine at Roydon has no capability to issue tickets other than from Roydon. Our research¹ has shown that adding the ability to purchase tickets other than from the station where the machine is located is a feature useful to passengers particularly at stations (like Roydon) where season ticket holders may wish to purchase extension tickets for one off journeys beyond their season ticket validity. This feature has been successfully added to Southern, Thameslink, Great Northern and London Overground ticket machines and we would recommend that Abellio Greater Anglia should likewise do so with its' ticket vending machines.

The ticket vending machines capacity to deal with transactions at peak times could also be extended if Oyster / contactless pay-as-you-go were to be extended to Roydon. Currently the boundary is at Broxbourne the next station from Roydon towards London. Staff at Roydon tell us that 75% of the stations passengers travel toward London, and so if Oyster / contactless pay as you go were made available here it would make a significant contribution towards reducing the need for passengers to use a ticket vending machine or ticket office at this location. You will recall that our recent report on improving public transport access to London's airports recommends that Oyster / contactless pay as you go should be extended to Stansted Airport². This would of course require that Roydon be included as it is on the line of route.

London TravelWatch is also concerned about the treatment of season ticket holders if the ticket office were closed. As I understand it you would encourage such holders to renew or buy their tickets at other stations. However, for existing holders I understand that the introduction of separate database at London Liverpool Street now means that information on ticket holders from Roydon cannot now be accessed at this location. In the event of a problem this would require passengers to travel to Harlow Town to sort out the issue. This situation is unsatisfactory and will be a severe inconvenience to the passengers concerned.

Consultation process

We have previously expressed to you our dissatisfaction with the way in which the consultation process was carried out. I attach as an appendix our previous email correspondence. The consultation was not featured on your website and no plans for the replacement platform and buildings were made available, even to us as the statutory watchdog. Thus it was extremely difficult for passengers to find out exactly what is or was proposed in terms of works at the station. In addition I note from your letter of the 2nd September 2015, that you no longer intend to proceed with the proposals that you had been previously committed to. This is extremely disappointing and disingenuous to the members of the public who had taken the time to respond to the consultation even with the bare minimum of facts that were available to them.

Mitigation measures and general upkeep of the station

From the site visit that I undertook on the 19th August 2015 I noted that the station was in extremely poor condition, and that recommendations for improvements that London TravelWatch had recommended from a previous site visit in 2005 had never been taken up. It was disappointing that broken cycle storage areas that were in poor condition in 2005 have never been removed or replaced. In 2015 there were a number of cycles parked on platform 1 that were positioned in such a way as to potentially cause an obstruction. Therefore please can I urge you that you incorporate in your designs for any rebuild of the station the provision of cycle storage on both platforms as a matter of priority. I note that the former goods shed is still in the possession of Network Rail, and that the former (pre 1960) ticket office on the Cambridge platform also in the possession of Network Rail (but used until recently as a restaurant) could potentially generate funds which could be reinvested in the station at Roydon. In particular respondents to the consultation were concerned about the lack of Customer Information Screens (CIS) on next train departures, the lack of secure cycle storage (as mentioned above) and the lack of a ticket vending facility on the Cambridge platform..

¹ http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=3896&field=file Value for money on London Overground – what passengers think.

² http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=3894&field=file Improving public transport access to London's airports.

RAIB recommendations for stations with platforms separated by a level crossing

London TravelWatch is extremely disappointed at your decision not to proceed with the proposal to add a ticket vending machine at the entrance to the platform 2 (towards Cambridge) and the car park.

As you will recall the RAIB investigation³ into the Elsenham accident recommended (recommendation 8 paragraph 382) that on stations with platforms separated by level crossings (as at Elsenham and Roydon), that an alternative ticket vending machine should be installed on platforms with no other ticketing facilities to reduce the need for passengers to use the level crossing. In the Elsenham case at the time of reporting the RAIB did not pursue the matter further because Abellio Greater Anglia had installed an additional ticket vending machine on the relevant platform. Roydon station operates in a similar manner, with similar risks to Elsenham and therefore I think there is a very strong case for installing a ticket vending machine at the entrance to platform 2 and the car park. This would help ensure that passengers using platform 2 or the car park use the level crossing at the safest possible moment rather than take unnecessary risks, and it would provide sufficient additional ticket vending capacity at the busiest times.

If you have any queries on our response please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Bellenger

Director – Policy and Investigation

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³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412044/061211_R232006_Elsenham.pdf