

# CLAIRE PERRY MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

## *Working for the Devizes Constituency*

Mark Hopwood  
Managing Director  
Great Western Railway  
Milford House  
Milford Street  
Swindon  
SN1 1HL

Ref: tlr

23 February 2018

Dear Mark

### **Newbury line closures 2018**

Further to our discussions about the programme of line closures to enable electrification and the new trains. We are very concerned that further clarity and improved communications are urgently required to ensure that rail passengers across the Devizes and Newbury Constituencies are fully aware of the programme, and the alternative arrangements for buses, car parking and season ticket holders.

We should therefore be grateful for an urgent update on the following:

#### Programme planning

- We understand that final confirmation of the whole programme is still to be confirmed, but meanwhile note that the number of weeks has risen from 8 to 11 – why is this?
- Why is there practically a month closure July to August i.e. what is the rationale for the 4 day break?
- Will workers be visible on the line and working 24/7 in non-residential areas to get the work done as quickly as possible?

#### Service Alternatives

- In addition to the alternatives on both the GWR and SWR networks for rail and car parking season ticket holders – can you confirm that these will also be in place at Chippenham and Swindon?

#### Communications

- We are concerned that to date, there has been insufficient communication about service alternatives and now that the programme and alternatives are largely confirmed it is vital

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that this is immediately boosted. We suggest that this includes detailed leaflets, posters, on-train announcements, website as well as local radio, press and facebook advertising.

- We would also like sight of the plan for customer support at stations (especially those that are usually unstaffed) during week commencing 12 March - the first week of the programme.

We are looking forward to your urgent update on these very important matters.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Perry Richard Benyon.

**The Rt Hon Claire Perry**  
**MP for the Devizes Constituency**

**The Rt Hon Richard Benyon**  
**MP for the Newbury Constituency**

cc. Mark Langman, Route Managing Director, Western, Network Rail