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Early Indicator of likely Congested Infrastructure: Willenhall (All Lines)

In accordance with the Network Rail Management of Congested Infrastructure Code of Practice (March 2024) (hereafter referred to as the “[Code of Practice](#)”), Network Rail is issuing this Early Indicator of Likely Congestion in relation to the section of the network around Willenhall.

Network Rail are anticipating growth in electric traction services across all electrified Routes within the North West & Central Region and have developed this advisory notice following on from operator engagement to understand the likely and aspirational forecast demand.

Area	Southern Boundary			Northern Boundary		
	Line of Route	Mileage	Nearest Tiploc	Line of Route	Mileage	Nearest Tiploc
Willenhall	RBS1	99 miles 43 chains	BKSWELL	RBS3 via PBJ	28 miles 1 chain	STAFVJ

Analysis undertaken to date indicates that there remains potential for this area of the network to support additional electric traction services between 00:00 and 06:00.

The draw on power supplies is variable throughout the day and as a result, specifying times when the network is at or exceeding these draws would be indicative only. The power capacity limitations at Willenhall will directly affect diversionary capability and evening peak movements including ECS movements. As timetables change or are amended on either a long or short-term basis the times of high-power consumption are liable to shift within a 24-hour period. It is anticipated that, regardless of the timetable pattern, the requirements on the power supply systems will remain at the levels which are causing concern.

This Early Indicator notice is issued in anticipation of a future formal declaration in line with the Code of Practice Section 3.2.1 (C) and (D).

Network Rail has outlined its concerns around some power supply and electrical traction constraints and the fact that the North West & Central network is very close to, at or exceeding these limits.

Areas of concern include:

- Acton Lane feeding area
- Washwood Heath / Willenhall feeding area
- Crewe / Weaver feeding area

This Early Indicator notice is one of three (stated above) being issued simultaneously relating to the impact of these capability constraints on known or likely applications for electric traction capacity.



The asset capacity (both switchgear and NGED cable) limit the power draw for trains particularly under diversions, but also increasingly during evening peaks - these are both in scope of currently planned renewal for CP7.

The network is also close to exceeding the contractual power draw limit and Network Rail will update the ORR and industry further when we are in a position to do so.

This notice is non-binding and advisory only with no legal or contractual status as detailed within the Code of Practice. As this notice is non-binding, it does not trigger the requirement for Network Rail to undertake either a Capacity Analysis, or a Capacity Enhancement Plan. Should the circumstances on this route require a formal declaration of congested infrastructure then the process outlined within the Code of Practice will be followed in order to comply with the Railways (Access Management and Licensing of Railway Undertakings) Regulations 2016.

A copy of this notice will be published on the Network Rail website and issued to the industry.

Chris Rowley
Capacity Planning Director



System Operator



Appendix to Early Warning Indicator for Willenhall

The below map is attached to this Early Warning Indicator to evidence the geographical extent of the notice. This notice relates to the orange shaded area.

