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Ms Ruth Ross, CEO
Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
Trevithick House
Stafford Park 4
Telford
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Our ref: COM-03246
13th March 2026

Dear Ms Ross,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, to John Larkinson, CEO, Office of Rail and Road (ORR), expressing your support for the open access application received by ORR for a new rail service connecting Liverpool, Shrewsbury, South Wales and Cardiff with direct access to Cardiff via Rhoose, and encouraging ORR to give a full and positive consideration to this application.

The relevant team at ORR have advised that by way of background, the Office of Rail and Road – as the independent regulator – has a statutory role to make impartial decisions on applications to access the railway. We need to take account of many factors before reaching any decisions, including our statutory duties to:

- protect the interests of users of railway services;
- promote the use of the network for passengers and goods;
- promote competition for the benefit of rail users;
- have regard to the funds available to the Secretary of State for Transport; and
- promote improvements in railway service performance.

We are currently carrying out our review of this application. Among other considerations, this includes assessing: whether there is sufficient capacity for the proposed services and whether the services would unduly affect train performance; and, for open access proposals such as this one, what the financial impact on existing public sector operators would be.

As part of our assessment of this application we will take account of the representations of all interested parties, and we will include your comments in this consideration.

Yours sincerely

On behalf of the Public Correspondence Team



Joan