

LATIMER ROAD – UXBRIDGE ROAD AND SINGLE LINE TO OLYMPIA

INTRODUCTION

This is another article based on redundant London Transport files. The file also contains details of some other schemes, which will also be included because they were in the same vicinity and were linked to each other to a greater or lesser degree.

Metropolitan Railway electric trains first reached Kensington (Addison Road)¹ from 5 November 1906 which was the same date as when electric trains began working on the Hammersmith & City Line. Trains reversed in the north-east bay platforms (*Below*), each of them being electrified. In the photograph a six-car 1906 H&C Stock train is seen. It is not clear when the photograph was taken but it must have been in early electric days during a special event, or maybe even the opening day. Note that the through and main platform tracks are not electrified.



The LNWR electric service between Willesden Junction and Earl's Court began on 1 May 1914, initially with B Stock borrowed from the District Railway until the LNWR's own electric trains were ready – these began running from 22 November 1914. The unelectrified tracks in the photo above would by then have gained current rails. Four three-car trains were built by Metropolitan Carriage and had Siemens equipment².

Although longer trains operated on both the Metropolitan and LMS services when there were exhibitions at Olympia, three-car trains on each service was the norm.

Opposite: Three-car trains of 1906 Hammersmith & City Joint Met/GWR Stock on the Edgware Road – Kensington (Addison Road) service. A three-car train approaches north-east bay No.3 (*Left*) with a motor car leading – the space for the luggage compartment can clearly be seen. In north-east bay No.3 (*Right*) a driving trailer (as the Met preferred to call control trailers!) is at the north end of a train for Edgware Road. Note that the platform and through roads are electrified for the LMS service to and from Earl's Court. Trains working the Kensington Addison Road shuttles carried the letter 'K' in the centre cab windows to distinguish them from Hammersmith trains. It is interesting to note that in 1933 the two trains for the Addison Road service originated from New Cross depot on the East London Line. These two trains formed two early-morning workings from the East London Line to Hammersmith and then took up service for the rest of the day on the Addison Road shuttles. They

¹ Known as 'Kensington' from opening, it was renamed Kensington (Addison Road) in 1868 (exact date uncertain). When London Transport services began operating, it was renamed Kensington (Olympia) with effect from 19 December 1946.

² The bulk of the LNWR electric stock comprised trains built jointly by Met. Carriage and the LNWR at Wolverton. These also worked on the Willesden – Earl's Court service. The pre-war fleet also comprised some trains of GEC Compartment Stock – your writer would be interested to know if these ever worked Willesden to Earl's Court.

stabled at night at Hammersmith depot. However, from the end of April 1935 the two shuttle trains were scheduled to be two cars instead of three, starting and stabling at Hammersmith. From May 1936 two-car District Stock trains took over the (Metropolitan) shuttle service.

Photos: Courtesy the late Alan A. Jackson (Left) and the late H.C. Casserley (Right)



Because of the Second World War and necessary economies, from 29 January 1940 the Willesden Junction – Earl's Court service was withdrawn midday off-peak and after 21.00 Mondays to Fridays, and also Saturdays after 15.00³. A similar fate befell the Metropolitan's Edgware Road service a week later from 5 February 1940:

06.44 to 09.06 ex-Edgware Road (8 trips), 06.28 to 09.28 ex-Addison Road (10 trips) Mon-Sat.
15.43 to 19.06 ex-Edgware Road (11 trips), 16.05 to 19.23 ex-Addison Road (11 trips) Mon-Fri.
11.43 to 14.22 ex-Edgware Road (9 trips), 12.04 to 14.46 ex-Addison Road (9 trips) Sat.

From 12 August 1940 the Willesden – Earl's Court service was reduced further:

Monday to Saturday –

06.00 – 09.25 ex-Willesden Junction) 8 round trips
06.24 – 09.51 ex-Earl's Court) intervals 25-32 mins

Monday to Friday –

15.45 – 19.08 ex-Willesden Junction) 9 round trips
16.08 – 19.29 ex-Earl's Court) intervals 19-40 mins

Saturday –

11.50 – 14.21 ex-Willesden Junction) 7 round trips
12.15 – 14.38 ex-Earl's Court) intervals 13-36 mins

One week later from 19 August 1940 the last two round trips Addison Road – Edgware Road were withdrawn Monday to Friday evenings.

But on 20 October 1940 last trains ran Edgware Road – Kensington (Addison Road) and Willesden Junction – Earl's Court because of infrastructure damage.

The line between Willesden Junction and Clapham Junction was closed on 3 October 1940 with St. Quintin Park, West Brompton (WLER), Chelsea & Fulham and Battersea stations closed. Uxbridge Road and Kensington Addison Road closed when the Metropolitan service ended on 20 October.

POST-WAR

Following its closure to passenger services, London Transport reinstated an 'exhibitions only' service in December 1946. The Metropolitan's shuttle service from Edgware Road normally terminated in the electrified north-east bay platforms and the (then) LMS Willesden Junction – Earl's Court service used the Up and Down platforms. Also electrified were the two Up and Down lines through the station and the north-west bay platforms. The Metropolitan service had used the connecting line between Uxbridge Road Junction (on the West London Line) and Latimer Road (on the Hammersmith & City Line).

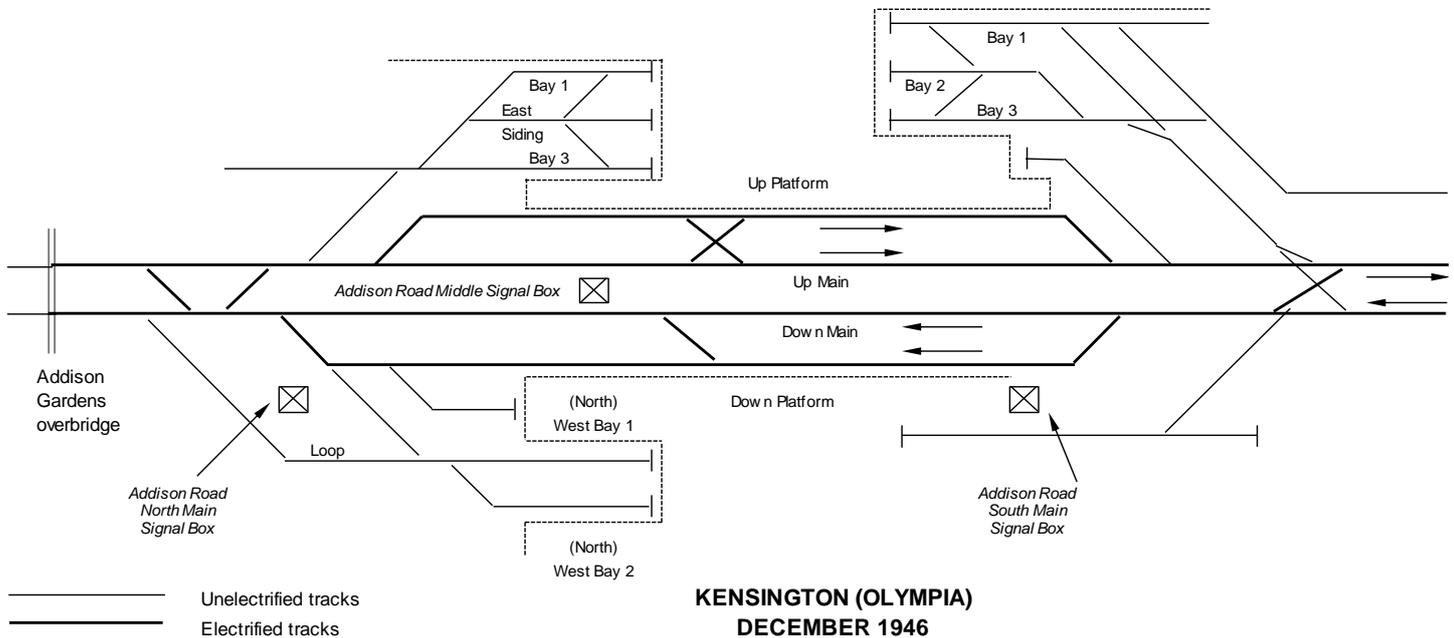
When the District began operating to Kensington (Olympia) in December 1946, it shared tracks with the main line, which was then only used by freight trains. It is assumed that the current rails had been isolated sometime after closure, because we are told that on reopening, current rails were live:

- Kensington (Olympia) – Earl's Court Up line.
- West Kensington East Junction – Kensington (Olympia) Down line.
- Kensington (Olympia) Up and Down platform roads.

³ There had been no LNWR Sunday service between Willesden Junction and Earl's Court since 1 January 1917. The Metropolitan Railway's service between Edgware Road and Kensington Addison Road last operated on 28 April 1918.

- Kensington (Olympia) Up and Down main (through) roads.
- Up and Down roads between Kensington (Olympia) and 'north' as far as Addison Gardens overbridge. This was to provide an emergency reversing facility should it not be possible for District Line trains to use the (normal) south end of the Down platform.

The line was single-end fed from Earl's Court substation. No current was switched on to the north-east and north-west bays.



Of course, the Metropolitan service never resumed and neither did the LMS *per se*, but the need for Olympia to be rail served during exhibitions resulted in London Transport providing a District Line service to and from Earl's Court. The first event was "Bertram Mills Circus and Fun Fair" and current was switched on from Earl's Court substation on Monday 16 December 1946 for the purpose of training runs using two six-car trains allocated for the future service. On Thursday 19 December 1946 the trains carried children attending circus rehearsals, while ordinary passengers were carried from the following day. It is noted that "either four or six trains per hour" will operate (during exhibition hours).

We now pick up the correspondence in 1951 when on 28 July the District Operating Superintendent of the Railway Executive (Western Region) wrote to London Transport with two proposals which would affect both parties. They were:

- Concentration and closure – Hammersmith Western Region and the removal of the junction between Uxbridge Road and Latimer Road.
- The recovery of the Crystal Palace Loop (at Westbourne Park).

The letter refers to a previous meeting held on 12 February 1950 where it was decided there was no cause to reinstate the pre-war LT rail service between Edgware Road and Kensington (Olympia) as it was considered that the existing service between Edgware Road and Putney Bridge, along with local buses, met all requirements. Therefore, the only usage of the link between Uxbridge Road and Latimer Road was the return trip of the 01.10 Old Oak Common to Hammersmith coal train (03.20 Hammersmith to Old Oak Common). By the running of this train by an alternative route would enable the junction with the West London Line to be recovered and in consequence the closure of Uxbridge Road Junction signal box to be, thereby making financial savings. It is noted that an alternative route for the coal train would be running the empties direct from Hammersmith to Paddington (Suburban), engine run round, and thence to Old Oak Common. To do this would require the goods train empties to be no longer than 12 wagons and a brake van to be provided at each end of the train. The train would need to be clear of Paddington (Suburban) before London Transport services begin at 04.52.

During the period between the 1950 meeting and the July 1951 letter, the Western Region also raised the possibility of recovering the Crystal Palace Loop. The Down line of this runs behind Subway Junction signal box and connects with the westbound Hammersmith & City Line east of

Westbourne Park. The only user of this section was the 01.10 Old Oak Common to Hammersmith coal train and if this were to run via Paddington (Suburban) then the loop could be closed and track recovered. Alternatively, with the (LT) connection removed, the line could become an additional siding. This would require the same provision for the train formation – i.e. a maximum of 12 wagons and a brake van at each end of the train.

An internal hand-written note dated 2 August 1951 states that the limit on the number of wagons is because of the restricted length of the reception road in Hammersmith goods yard for the locomotive to run round. It acknowledges that the use of the Uxbridge Road – Latimer Road connection is limited to the nightly coal train, but also by steam ballast trains to and from Lillie Bridge depot on an infrequent basis. However, it states that any ballast train to the Hammersmith & City Line via this route gets onto the Hammersmith & City Line far quicker than via Edgware Road. On the other hand, to close Latimer Road signal box and to reduce the number of Station Foremen from three to two would save £427 per annum, plus the saving on maintaining signalling equipment for the (Latimer Road) junction. On 9 August a memorandum from the General Superintendent (Traffic) to the Civil Defence Engineer invites comments from his point of view.

The letter of 28 July 1951 from the Western Region asked that LT consider its proposals as soon as possible, but this wasn't forthcoming, as the Western Region urged a reply in letters dated 6 September and 3 October 1951. A separate letter from the Western Region to London Transport, also on 3 October 1951, stated that the Up bay line at Kensington Olympia had not been used by electric stock since 1938 and suggested that its current rails could be recovered at the same time as the relaying work at Uxbridge Road Junction, thereby "assisting with the Scrap and Steel Drive". It also asks the question as to whether London Transport intended running electric trains into the bay line in the future.

London Transport replied on 12 October 1951 that it had no intention of re-introducing the pre-war passenger service between Edgware Road and Kensington Olympia and had no objection to the current rails in the Up bay being removed. The same letter also stated that they (LT) had agreed for the recovery of the electric traction equipment on the spur between Latimer Road and Uxbridge Road stations. It concludes by saying that LT will continue to use the electric tracks on the Down side of Kensington (Olympia) station for the shuttle service to and from Earl's Court during exhibitions and other major events.

The involvement of the LT Civil Defence people must have rang alarm bells, for in a memo to the Operating Manager dated 18 October 1951, they express concern about the removal of the link between Uxbridge Road and Latimer Road. It notes that if the route between Paddington and High Street Kensington were put out of action for any length of time by enemy attack, it could be an alternative route for the Circle Line. It appreciates, however, that only a limited service could be run via this route because there is no equivalent to the Cromwell Curve triangle immediately west of Earl's Court and in the event, a bus service would probably be preferable, as during the war. Therefore, there is not a strong case to retain this section of track, providing nothing is done to prevent its reinstatement in an emergency. It then goes on to note that in the event of a blockage of the tracks between Uxbridge Road and Willesden Junction, the heavy north-south freight traffic would be disrupted and the link between Uxbridge Road and Latimer Road would be invaluable as a temporary alternative route.

In the meanwhile, there appears to have been no reply from LT to the Western Region about its (July) proposals and was now "being pressed by the Railway Executive Headquarters" in a short sharp letter dated 26 October 1951.

With 'cages' duly 'rattled' LT responded on 29 October by raising no objections to the re-scheduling the Hammersmith coal train so that the connection between Uxbridge Road and Latimer Road and the Crystal Palace Loop could be removed. Reservations about the abolition are made from the Civil Defence angle and suggests that a final decision is made only after further discussions.

We then move forward 21 months to 6 July 1953 where a letter states that the recovery of the electrical equipment between Kensington Olympia and Willesden Junction (including the connection to Latimer Road) had been delayed because the assessment of passenger traffic following the opening of the new Government offices at Charles House. It was concluded that there was no case to reinstate the service between Kensington (Olympia) and Edgware Road, nor between the former and Willesden Junction and that the work to remove the equipment and the connection may proceed.

London Transport noted that even after the opening of Charles House, it had no intention of operating the services via Uxbridge Road Junction and Latimer Road and noted that the current rails north of Kensington (Olympia) had "already been partially removed". This was confirmed in a letter to British Railways (Western Region) but added the rider that they (LT) would continue to use the electrified tracks on the Down side of Kensington (Olympia) for its shuttle service to Earl's Court "which is run for the benefit of people attending exhibitions and other major events at Olympia".

A meeting on 21 September 1953 recorded the first mention of possibly segregating the District Line service from the main line tracks, and noted the following:

- Segregate the LT service from the main line and provide a single electrified track from Earl's Court Junction into the south-west bay platform at Kensington Olympia.
- This would enable the whole of the conductor rails remaining on the West London Line to be removed.
- Line capacity for freight trains would be increased.
- Earl's Court Junction signal box could be closed.

It was realised that to provide a single electrified line would be a costly project, even with the savings made by abolishing Earl's Court Junction signal box. A spur from the south-west bay platform could be utilised as part of the new line but between the overbridge at Kensington Olympia and Earl's Court Junction signal box the existing Up and Down lines are bounded on the Down side by private property and on the Up side by the Greenford loop and Up Goods loop which are at a higher level than the main lines. Neither of those loops could be given up by the main line and at the Earl's Court Junction end the scheme could not be carried out without either the purchase of land on the Down side or encroachment on Warwick Road coal yard on the Up side. Despite the fact that LT trains are sometimes delayed by main line freight trains, it was regarded as insufficient to justify the heavy expenditure of a segregated single line project. It is noted that the only event where LT trains are busy through the day is during the Ideal Home Exhibition and for the greater part of the year the running of electric trains over the short distance between Kensington South Main and Earl's Court Junction presented no problems. Insofar as signalling in the area was concerned, it was already in the minds of the Railway Executive to reconstruct Kensington (Olympia) station and rationalise signal boxes. To that end, two new signal boxes would replace the existing ones at Uxbridge Road, Kensington North Main, Kensington Middle, Kensington South Main and Earl's Court Junction.

It is recalled that when the District Line service to Kensington Olympia was introduced in December 1946, 'electric track equipment' was replaced throughout the station, so that there would be alternatives in the event of the south end of the Down line platform not being available but no instance had been recalled of the 'alternatives' being used. Therefore, it was suggested that the current rails from all lines in the station would be recovered, except for the portion of the Down platform between the crossover near the footbridge and the connection from the Down line at Kensington South Main, thence through the crossover to the Up line. But if an 'alternative' facility was required, then a new connection from the Down main line to the south-west bay line spur could be provided and electrified. This would provide a facility for a second electric train to serve Kensington (Olympia) with the Down platform occupied, which could prove of some value in busy periods. The bay platform would be able to accommodate a six-car train.

The Western Region stated in a letter dated 16 October 1953 that to segregate the LT service from the main line would be "too expensive a project at the present time". It recommends the recovery of all current rails in the station with the exception of the portion of the Down line between the crossover near the footbridge and the connection from the Down line at Kensington South Main, thence through the crossover to the Up line.

London Transport appears to support these plans, especially if a service suitable to an event of the nature of the Ideal Home Exhibition is to be provided. It states that if this was carried out, it would wish the current rails retained in the Down line platform to accommodate an eight-car train, but would have no objection to the other current rails being removed.

In a letter dated 17 December 1953 from the Western Region to London Transport, it queries the electrification of the bay platform as being a 'possibility' rather than a definite proposal but London Transport responded on 5 January 1954 that it would be desirable to have two trains at Kensington (Olympia) during exhibitions of the Ideal Home type and was anxious for this to be provided.

In the meanwhile, it had been agreed by all concerned that the connection between Latimer Road and Uxbridge Road could be abolished. In consequence the Hammersmith overnight goods trips were retimed to operate via Paddington. To that end, on 27 February 1954 Nos.6 & 7 points at Latimer Road Junction were secured for through running to Hammersmith, for removal at a later date. On the main line side, at Uxbridge Road Junction, the severing of the link was initially scheduled for 21 February 1954 but in fact took place a week later. The Western Region Traffic Circular No.K2/239 and Eastern Region Traffic Circular No.259, both of 24 February 1954, records –

28 FEBRUARY 1954. UXBRIDGE ROAD. The trailing points in the Up Main leading from the Latimer Road branch and the facing points, facing point lock and bar in the Down Main leading to the Latimer Road branch will be taken out of use. The following signals will also be taken out of use:

Up Branch Distant (lower arm on Latimer Road Up Starting).

Up Branch Home.

Down Branch Starting.

Down Main to Branch Inner Home.

With regards to the proposal to electrify the bay platform and to provide a facing connection, even this was judged as being “an exceedingly expensive proposition which would be difficult to justify”. Moreover, it would conflict with the Western Region’s plans to provide lavatory and waiting room facilities on the Down platform. The decision had to be considered whether electrification of the bay would take place without the new facilities.

Having dealt with the removal of the connection to the Hammersmith & City Line at Latimer Road, the Western Region wrote to London Transport on 2 March 1954 about the removal of current rails at Kensington (Olympia). It expressed the view that at no time since the District Line service was introduced in December 1946, there had never been the need to have two electric trains together at Kensington (Olympia) and on occasions where there had been a failure, the service was suspended and a bus service introduced. It also states that if the south-west bay was to be electrified the new waiting accommodation would be required to serve both the Down and bay platforms and in order to obtain adequate platform space each side of the building, it would be necessary to cut back the loading dock in the bay platform which was estimated to cost £2,000. The Western Region also points out the additional costs which would be involved in electrifying the bay line and installing a new connection could not be justified which “will be rarely, if ever, used”.

On 8 March 1954, LT’s Divisional Superintendent ‘C’ (District/Piccadilly) stated that when it was necessary to have two electric trains at Kensington (Olympia), arrangements were made for the first to detrain at the approach end of the Down platform and then proceed through that platform to the Down Main line and reverse via the west bay 2 Home signal to the Up platform, where passengers entrained for the journey to Earl’s Court. It is noted that this method of working had not operated “for two or three years”. However, if it was necessary to provide a third train on the shuttle service, this would have to be held at the Home signal whilst the one in the platform was detrained and then entrained.

The Western Region responded on 22 March 1954 by suggesting that the only reason for two trains to be at Kensington Olympia at the same time “is associated almost exclusively with the ideal Home Exhibition” but noted that “this method of working has not been resorted to for the past two or three years”. It concludes that although the facility “to have two trains at Olympia at the same time would be of value on occasions, no undue difficulty would arise from the absence of such a facility”. It seems therefore that it would be the intention to remove all the current rails in Kensington (Olympia) station apart from the Down platform road and the crossover to the Up line south of the station. To that end, Western Region Traffic Circular K2/244 gave details to track and signal alterations in the station area, undertaken between 3 and 9 April 1954. It did not deal with the removal of current rails in the area but this was brought up again in a Western Region letter [interestingly on Great Western Railway headed paper, but crossed through with ‘Western Region’ stamped above it] dated 14 July 1954 inviting interested parties to a meeting, which took place on 29 July 1954. In addition to the removal of redundant current rails, the proposed centralisation of signalling was also on the agenda, whereby all signalling between Kensington middle and Earl’s Court Junction would be incorporated in Kensington South Main box. The scheme envisaged LT trains to reverse in the Down platform as at

present but a new connection to be provided on the Down Main on the Earl's Court side of Hammersmith Road bridge and for LT trains to work in both directions on the Down line between Kensington South Main and Earl's Court Junction. With this, a 10-minute District Line service could be provided with a 4-minute turn round at Kensington (Olympia).

We now jump to 24 January 1955 in the correspondence, when an internal LT memorandum laid down requirements for the bay platform – a 30ft long sand drag and space for a 6-car R Stock train (315ft), with hoped for agreement with the Western Region. Two days later it is noted that the Western Region would wish to retain the end-on loading facility in the bay platform and would not provide either a sand drag or hydraulic buffer stop. London Transport's requirements would be a sand drag but suggested providing to board over the sand drag for end-on loading and unloading portable heavy planking. On 29 January 1955 it was released that it was barely possible to get a six-car train in the bay platform without a sand drag. The Western Region would be approached and it would be emphasised that a sand drag, however short, is necessary to meet London Transport's dead-end provision. It was noted that the absence of a good margin for overrun would make this even more necessary, which was brought to the fore in a recent incident at Moorgate (Metropolitan Line). If the Western Region did not agree to planking over a sand drag for end-on loading it would be suggested to them to extend the berth to incorporate a catch point and sand trough arrangement, similar to that at Holborn on the Aldwych platform, the trap points being hand-operated when end loading is in operation.

The Western Region replied on 1 February 1955 that with London Transport requiring safeguards for their trains at terminal stations, they (WR) too required their safeguards for the end-on loading facility. They suggested that a heavy portable cover could be provided and located over the sand drag or oil buffer when end-on loading takes place, or the length of margin for overrun be increased sufficiently to permit the installation of a (hand-operated) trap point and sand trough. This would require that the platform length be increased to accommodate a train of 315ft, a margin of 20ft and a sand drag (or equivalent) of 30ft – 365ft all told.

It was then noted on 10 February 1955 that following a site inspection the new and independent bay platform for the District Line could be made of sufficient length to accommodate an eight-car train, with a platform face length of 470ft, to provide 420ft train length, margin of 20ft and sand drag 30ft. A meeting was then scheduled to take place on-site at Kensington Olympia for Thursday 14 April 1955 with a specific request for diagrams of the engineering layout of the sand drag at the Holborn end of the Aldwych branch to be brought along so they could be related for the proposal for Kensington Olympia. The notes of that meeting (dated 15 April 1955!) highlighted the following:

- The Western Region Signal & Telegraph (S&T) Engineer made it clear that the signalling in the Kensington South area was in urgent need of replacement and if authority for the BR/LT segregation could be obtained within five months then the S&T could carry out the resignalling work involved under the replacement scheme.
- The query was also raised as to whether the S&T would wish to control the signalling on the single line from Earl's Court, and to provide the signalling on the single line. It was noted that the signalling on the single line should be controlled from Kensington (Olympia) and as LT had not required the signalling alterations, which were improvements for the Western Region's benefit on their system, then the work should be carried out by the Western Region at their expense.
- It was enquired of the Western Region's S&T Engineer how soon the alterations could be carried out, particularly to the south-west bay platform, bearing in mind the usual exhibitions and events that take place at Olympia later in the year, which would preclude any engineering possessions. It was estimated that the work could be done during September and October (1955), with much of it on Sundays.
- The proposed scheme highlighted an exceptionally narrow platform at the point adjoining the new waiting room and suggested that platforms of a sufficient width were provided only on the waiting room side of the bay road.
- Both the Western Region and London Transport agreed that it would be satisfactory for a straight run in when the trap points were closed and it was required to end-load or unload vehicles. With this arrangement the trap points would normally be open when LT trains were reversing in the bay road and any such train which overran the trap points would be deflected by them from the straight track into the sand trough and away from the platform edge.

A hand-written note five days later asks if the bay road should have a platform on one side only, or on both sides, as originally proposed by the Western Region. The latter arrangement would allow for some segregation of alighting and boarding traffic. The resulting consensus was that there was no real justification for two platforms, nor any serious need to separate passenger flows, except on Saturday evenings during the Ideal Home Exhibition only, but this had been managed hitherto without any difficulty.

On the same date LT's General Superintendent (Traffic) Railways wrote to the Signal Engineer to consider the Western Region scheme for replacing the two lines between Earl's Court Junction and Kensington (Olympia) by a single line between those two points. The Western Region's S&T proposed to install two-aspect colour light signals on the single line. A separate memorandum, also on the same date from LT to the Western Region states that the proposals "appear to be satisfactory subject to the proposed arrangements for the platform, sand troughs and trap points in the south-west bay".

The broad outline of the plan was:

- Convert the present Down Main Line into an independent Up and Down line from Earl's Court Junction to the south-west bay line, to be used exclusively by London Transport electric services.
- Convert the present Up Main Line into the Down Main and the present Greenford Loop into the Up Main, between Kensington South Main and a point just beyond Earl's Court Junction signal box.

In summary, London Transport stated that the plan met all their requirements and had no objections to it provided the single line was satisfactorily signalled. The Western Region also approved the plan and would be supplying estimates. It was unanimously agreed to delete the additional platform on the Olympia side of the south-west bay as a widened Down bay platform would be adequate but with an adjustment to the waiting room building. For the Western Region's benefit, Kensington Middle, Kensington South and Earl's Court Junction signal boxes would be amalgamated.

In the meantime arrangements were put in hand for the proposed signalling of the single line between Earl's Court Junction and Kensington (Olympia). One problem highlighted in a memorandum dated 10 June 1955 was the proposed starting signal on the new bay platform. Objections were raised that if the signal cleared automatically, difficulties would occur with the train timings "in that not all our Guards are provided with watches". It was, however, appreciated that it was the responsibility of the Guard to start the train to time, even if the relevant signal is cleared some considerable time beforehand and if difficulty was anticipated then a clock with a clearly distinguishable face be provided on the platform in question.

On 5 July 1955 LT's Operating Manager wrote to the Western Region seeking assurance that signal post telephones would be provided at two specific signals on the diagram, communicating with (LTs) West Kensington East signal cabin, and the clock should be visible to both drivers and guards, and positioned near the bay road starting signal.

A document, also dated 5 July 1955, summarised the proposals to date:

- Elimination of current rails and connections on all tracks used by British Railways' trains, avoiding the need for the clipping and unclipping of the ATC shoes on Western Region locomotives before or after leaving Kensington (Olympia). Not only would this save fitters' time but the absence of the train having to stop for this purpose would enable overall timings to be improved.
- Modernisation of signalling, including the abolition of Kensington Middle and Earl's Court Junction signal boxes and their amalgamation into Kensington South Main.
- LT trains currently work into the Down platform and current rails exist on this and other tracks associated with the electric train services that previously worked to and from Willesden Junction and Latimer Road but now abandoned. LT trains would thus be confined to one track and the south-west bay road would be developed (as previously described) for (almost) exclusive use, apart from a few freight trains that require end-on loading or unloading facilities, principally for circus traffic.
- The existing double line from Earl's Court will converge into a single line just north of Earl's Court Junction signal box and run into the bay road. The only physical connection with the main line would be a trailing crossover in the Down Main line south of Kensington (Olympia) station, which is necessary for traffic to and from Lillie Bridge depot and the hitherto mentioned occasional circus traffic.

- The length of the single line would be 1,800ft, including the platform.
- The bay road starting signal to work automatically, but to have an overriding control by Kensington South Main signal box. The junction home signals in both directions, along with the shunt signals to and from Lillie Bridge depot, to be controlled from LTs West Kensington East signal cabin, with 'acceptance' from Kensington South Main box.
- The bay road to be 470ft long, with a train berth of 420ft, sand troughs of 30ft and margin of 20ft. The sand troughs will be in lieu of a sand drag and there will be duplicate rails (with a pair of points operated by a ground frame to permit end-loading vehicles to go right up to the buffer stop. The ground frame, released by Annetts Key 'A' will be interlocked with the signal box. The crossover, south of the station, will be controlled by a ground frame, released by Annetts Key 'B' will be interlocked with the signal box. A diagram of the proposed layout was dated 22 August 1955.
- The traction current feed is from Earl's Court substation which will remain unchanged.

On 20 October 1955 London Transport informed the Western Region of its concern in continuing the present exchange of wagons between Lillie Bridge depot and their sidings at Earl's Court Junction, which takes place between 08.00 and 09.00 each weekday. The new arrangements would require careful timings to fit in with the LT service and those of the Western Region. To that end, a meeting between the two organisations was scheduled for 8 November 1955.

The outcome of that meeting concluded that there was only one shunt move on weekdays only, performed by LT engine and staff, with the work at the Western Region sidings being done by the Warwick Road shunter. It was timed to leave Lillie Bridge and 07.55 and all was normally completed by 08.30. On only very rare occasions was a second trip necessary, in which case this was done after the booked transfer. It was appreciated that there were only two events at Olympia which required an electric service operating before 09.30, namely the British Industrial Fair and Crufts Dog Show, between them taking up just three weeks of the year, when the train service begins at 08.45. With the ground frame working, the connection between the electric line and the Down Main line would be operated by LT staff and thus two Ballast Guards would be required.

However, all was not well at t'mill with regard to LT Ballast Guards operating the ground frame on the single line and this was referred to the trade unions. Meanwhile, the Western Region were anxious for a decision from LT for the scheme to proceed. On 9 January 1956 LT asked the Western Region if they could cover the operation of the ground frame because "we are likely to experience difficulty in providing ballast guards who will be qualified to operate the ground frame at Kensington (Olympia)". If the difficulty could not be resolved it may be necessary to revert to the original arrangement whereby the transfer of wagons was made by the Western Region, in which case they would be responsible for operating the ground frame.

On 30 January 1956 it seems that things were no further forward because the Western Region had asked London Transport for passenger figures using the Olympia service, to justify the retention of the electric service between Earl's Court and Kensington (Olympia). In 1955 the special service was operated on 141 days of the year and an estimated number of passengers carried for the year was 1,700,000. LTs Operating Manager was of the opinion that if the service was withdrawn it "would meet with strong protest".

An internal memorandum dated 16 February 1956 it is noted that the Western Region intend to proceed with the scheme for a single line "whatever the decision is with regard to the operation of the ground frame". They had not considered what steps they would take if LT Guards did not operate the ground frame.

On 25 February 1956 we note that staff negotiations at Lillie Bridge had reached an agreement for LT to operate the new equipment, to be introduced by the Western Region. However, LT had previously taken over the transfer of the daily goods train by mutual agreement so as to suit the general operations at Lillie Bridge depot, which enabled goods to be transferred on the same day to Acton Works and Northfields. The Regions expressed difficulty in providing this service at a stated time because of "shortage of engine power or personnel". At this time it seems that the main line had accepted that it was an obligation for LT to continue the service at their cost in the future, which would mean budgeting for an additional Ballast Guard. Further correspondence between London Transport and British Railways Western Region then ensued over costs and operation of the goods train which reached District Operating Superintendent level at Paddington.

On 3 May 1956 the Western Region advised London Transport that work had been approved for the centralisation of signalling at Kensington South along with the alterations to the track layout and to that end the Civil Engineer has been asked to proceed with the work.

To be continued