

Grand Union

David Reed

Senior Manager, Access Policy

Office of Rail and Road

David.reed@orr.gov.uk

By email

Dear David,

Grand Union proposed Track Access contract with Network Rail - WCML

Below is the Grand Union response to Network Rail's reply to Grand Union's Section 17 application.

Our preference would always be to agree our contract with Network Rail, but as is acknowledged in their response this is not always possible. With the introduction of the EE test, and the recent award of the West Coast Partnership then our application needed to be made to meet the timescales for delivery and also to provide clarity for the incoming franchisee.

On journey time protection Grand Union is aware of the need for more timetable flexibility for development of the network, and while not directly referenced in the draft contract, will continue to discuss options with Network Rail if access is approved.

Network Rail has stated that Grand Union has sought it to undertake work to deliver enhancements to the permissible speed of 110mph for certain non-tilt stock. This is not correct. Grand Union has asked Network Rail what, if any, work is being undertaken by Network Rail on this issue for the proposed new franchised services non-tilt stock. It would appear from the response that no such work is being undertaken at this time.

GRAND UNION TRAINS LIMITED

Riverside Lodge, Fulford, YORK, YO19 4RB -

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Discussions are on-going with Transport Scotland and Scotrail on possible station improvements and if access is approved would expect the length of the contract award to be tied to certain investment provisions.

The specified equipment is route cleared over parts of the WCML, and Eversholt Rail continues to work with its consultants and Network Rail on route clearance on other sections.

In view of the work being undertaken by Network Rail at the request of the ORR, Grand Union has only undertaken (at this stage) a high level investigation into the available capacity, but is confident that capacity exists in various hours for its very limited service proposal.

It is also clear that with much less prescription in track access contracts, Network Rail's ability to utilise valuable capacity is significantly improved, and having been given those tools it is incumbent upon them to use them, particularly as the proposed services are so important to the connectivity between central Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Yeowart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ian Yeowart

Managing Director

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