

GNER Cleethorpes + West Yorkshire services section 17 track access application – Freightliner response

Rachel

We must firmly oppose this proposal.

Whilst we recognise the need for open access operators to have Firm Rights over a long enough period to enable investment to take place, the nature of the rights sought are in some contrast to those generally available to freight operators, with particular regard to maximum journey times (compared with +/- 30 minutes at destination for freight). There is no indication in the application that shows how these new services may be accommodated on the ECML (and in other areas, particularly between Leeds and Shipley) alongside existing Firm Rights, other than a somewhat blithe assumption that a timetable recast can solve the problem of finding space for an additional service. Similarly, there is no indication as to how the proposed maximum journey times are either possible or sustainable with a reasonable level of performance. In these areas, the concerns are identical to those raised in respect of the proposed Edinburgh services.

We remain very surprised that Network Rail has not yet declared the ECML as Congested Infrastructure, especially given the problems the applicant has had establishing its existing services due to the availability of suitable capacity on the route.

Regards

Jason Bird