



Proposed Track Access Contract Between

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited

and

Great North Western Railway Company Limited

Under Section 17 of the Railways Act 1993

Network Rail's Representations

Updated 22nd December following additional Capacity Assessments and Performance Assessments

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Introduction

This document is Network Rail's updated representations on the Great North Western Railway Company Limited (GNWR) (The Applicant) Section 17 Application (The Application) originally submitted to ORR on 17th November 2017. It is providing Network Rail's view on the capacity and performance considerations in connection with The Application.

The summary position is that Network Rail is unable to support The Application in its current form. The reasons for that are set out below.

Timetable Capacity

At the time of The Application, Network Rail did not have sufficient evidence to agree that the capacity existed for trains with the operating characteristics of the Specified Equipment. Network Rail found a number of significant clashes throughout the route which meant that The Application could not be supported.

Since The Application was made, Network Rail and The Applicant have met to discuss how the capacity study will be concluded. Significant changes are coming into effect north of Wigan in the Subsidiary Timetable 2018, as a result of timetable changes by Northern and Transpennine Express. This informed a decision to undertake the capacity assessment in two parts.

The first part of the capacity assessment considered train paths between London Euston and Winwick Jn, which have been assessed against the December 2016 timetable. The number of train conflicts were reduced to two instances, as detailed in the Section 17 response, submitted 17th November.

The unresolved issues in the capacity assessment (in the area between Euston and Winwick Jn) were limited to the following:

- GNWR path 1P17AR clashes with 1Q29.

22/12/2017 Update: the timetable conflicts with 1Q29 have not been resolved, as a compliant solution could not be found. As a consequence Network Rail could not support the rights for 1P17AR (15:52 from London Euston) on the days when 1Q29 is operating.

- GNWR path 1A98 has a clash on Tuesdays with 3Q69.

22/12/2017 Update: Due to conflicts with trains north of Crewe, the southbound service 1A98 has been planned in a compliant path which leaves Blackpool later in the evening (20:33). The consequence of this is that the previously identified clash on Tuesdays no longer exists.

The second part of the assessment reviewed capacity between Winwick Jn and Preston following the May 2018 timetable offer, to ensure that the most recent timetable change was included. The timetable under assessment was based on the WTT offered on 20th November 2017, which has since undergone some amendments following the Operator response period.

Following the conclusion of the capacity assessment, Network Rail cannot support all of the rights contained in The Application.

Network Rail is satisfied that the quantum of train slots requested on Saturdays and Sundays can be accommodated.

With reference to the Weekday quantum of six train slots in each direction, a summary table has been produced below to indicate which train slots have been demonstrated to be compliant with the Timetable Planning Rules, and could be supported in the event that The Applicant made an alternative application for rights, and subject to suitable Performance mitigations being agreed. Where the capacity has not been demonstrated, Network Rail would not support The Application.

Down Direction	London Euston	Blackpool North	Commentary
	<i>dep</i>	<i>arr</i>	
1P01	07:38:00	10:43:00	Capacity is available
1P07	10:33:00	13:37:00	Capacity is available
1P11	12:33:00	15:41:00	Capacity is available
1P17	15:52:00	18:30:00	Capacity cannot be demonstrated on Wednesdays when the NMT (1Q29/1Q27) is operating
1P29	19:33:00	22:35:00	Capacity is available
1P31	20:33:00	23:32:00	Capacity is available

Up Direction	Blackpool North	London Euston	Commentary
	<i>dep</i>	<i>arr</i>	
1A88	06:33:30	10:00:00	Capacity is available – path requires extended dwell at Crewe
1A90	08:59:00	12:00:00	Capacity is available
1A92	12:02:00	15:00:00	Capacity is available
1A94	14:58:00	18:02:00	Capacity is available
1A96	17:00:00	19:59:00	The 'Regular Calling Pattern' stop at Milton Keynes cannot be accommodated in this service
1A98	20:34:00	00:44:30	Capacity is available in amended times to GNWR preferred times (60 mins later departure)

The capacity assessment indicates that, from a capacity perspective, rights could be sold for five of the six services requested in the Down direction. All six train slots could be accommodated in the Up direction if sufficient flexibility of the preferred departure time is applied, with the omission of one of the Milton Keynes stops. This would be dependent on The Applicant making an alternative application to amend the rights sought.

Virgin Trains Section 22A 21st Supplemental Agreement

West Coast Trains Limited (“Virgin Trains”) 21st Supplemental application is requesting rights for three additional services between London Euston and Blackpool North from May 2018. As part of Network Rail’s representations on the application, it was noted that; “Network Rail recognises that Alliance Rail has aspirations to seek access rights for services on the same route to which this application relates. Network Rail notes the unresolved issue mentioned in Section 8.3 of the application form in respect of Alliance Rail which ORR may wish to further consider in making its decision concerning this application.”

Network Rail remains supportive of the Virgin Trains application from the Subsidiary Change Date 2018 until the Subsidiary Change Date 2019. Beyond this point, rights for the two competing aspirations cannot be accommodated together. The previous decision to support the Virgin Trains application was made prior to receipt of the GNWR application, and could be accommodated at that time.

Network Rail has undertaken a review of the two competing aspirations together and found that the capacity is not available for both Alliance and Virgin Trains in their preferred slots.

GNWR 1P07 10:33 Euston to Blackpool service and Virgin Trains 1P93 10:36 Euston to Blackpool service cannot be accommodated within the same hour of departure. In addition to this service, in the Up direction Virgin Train 1A93 Blackpool North to London Euston conflicts with GNWR path 1A94 on the approach to London Euston. Therefore, if Network Rail were now to consider both applications at the same time, then neither could be supported.

LNW Route - Train Performance

Performance of the rail network is of paramount importance to Network Rail as one of the key regulated performance indicators. Understanding the impact of introducing any new services is difficult, but the consequences of getting assessments wrong can be significant.

Network Rail has undertaken a performance assessment to understand the potential risks to performance of introducing six additional trains in each direction into the SX timetable. The performance assessment has included the train services which Network Rail would not support on the grounds that there is insufficient capacity.

Using the Working Timetable schedules for the December 2017 timetable the two headcodes either side of the GNWR aspirant path were identified and a Path Variance Berth Map was created. The Path Variance chart calculates the 25th and 75th percentile of when the train entered the signal berth. This is intended to give a view of consistency in running for each train. The premise being the greater variability in punctuality there is, the more risk that service carries on the West Coast Mainline South. See Appendix 1.

In undertaking this assessment, it is possible to conclude that the trains planned in the Down direction are consistently running in their planned paths in the sections tested (London Euston to Milton Keynes Central), and the risk of introducing new trains is low.

In the Up direction, the variance is greater between trains running in front and behind the GNWR aspirant path. More of the trains departing from Milton Keynes Central towards Euston are presenting later than the planned train path. Therefore there is a greater risk to performance at the times when GNWR want to operate. As a consequence of this increased risk, further analysis has been carried out on trains travelling in the Up direction. See Appendix 2.

The analysis focusses on the current performance levels of the trains which would be preceding the GNWR paths in the performance assessment. This is in order to understand the likelihood of those trains impacting on the Right Time arrival of the GNWR trains at their destination.

The performance analysis suggests that there is a high risk of three of the midweek Up direction GNWR services failing Right Time arrival at London Euston. For two of the passenger train slots, the preceding train is likely to negatively impact the Right Time arrival up to 66% of the time. For the third passenger train slot, the preceding train is likely to negatively impact the Right Time arrival up to 46% of the time. This is based on the actual performance information of the preceding train during the May 2017 timetable.

To be clear, Network Rail has not yet explored mitigation measures to counter the potential negative performance impact to the LNW Route.

Conclusion

When considering The Application in isolation from the Virgin Trains application, The Application cannot be supported on the basis that one of the down midweek passenger slots cannot be accommodated and one of the up services cannot accommodate the right that is sought to a Regular Call at Milton Keynes. When The Application is considered alongside the Virgin Trains application, there are two down and one Up GNWR passenger slots which cannot be accommodated. Therefore if Network Rail were to consider both applications alongside each other, then neither would be supported, as they would be competing applications.

On the basis of the performance assessments undertaken to date, Network Rail could not support The Application without further exploring mitigations to address the concerns regarding the risks to On Time performance and Right Time arrivals at destination.

Network Rail would welcome further discussion with The Applicant and ORR regarding any alternative aspirations to the current application, including relevant mitigation which could be developed to limit negative impact on LNW Route performance.

Appendix

Enclosed

1. 'London Euston to Blackpool North - Alliance Rail - Performance Appraisal.pptx'
Analysis of train running performance of adjacent trains to the proposed GNWR trains.
2. 'May 2017 TT Lateness Details GNWR.xlsx' Analysis of London Euston arrival times of trains which precede the aspirant GNWR trains.