



Ian Williams
Track Access Manager
Office of Rail and Road
One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

Network Rail
Floor 4B
George Stephenson House
Toft Green, York
YO1 6JT
Telephone: ☎
Email: ✉

06 June 2018

Dear Ian,

RE: Proposed 7th Supplemental Agreement to the Track Access Contract between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited and Grand Central Railway Company Limited under Section 22A of the Railways Act 1993

Network Rail's Representations

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2018. Network Rail wishes to make the following representations with regard to the above application submitted to the industry on 8th March 2018.

Network Rail notes that Grand Central Railway Company Limited (Grand Central) secured a long term track access contract from 1st August 2014 to Principal Change Date (PCD) 2026 and that this application seeks additional access rights from PCD 2018 until the end of the contract.

With regard to the general position regarding new access rights on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) Network Rail wrote to the industry on 20th September 2017 noting that beyond May 2019 it remained uncertain as to the timing and effect of projected capacity enhancement schemes which might facilitate the operation of additional train services for which access rights would be required. Network Rail is currently reviewing this position and is minded to advise the industry in the near future that in the case of any access rights that have already been sold until May 2019 only, where these remain appropriate to the train services operated, it would expect to agree to the perpetuation of these access rights until May 2020. It follows that were it possible to support access rights starting at PCD in 2018, aside from other points of detail which are discussed below, Network Rail would in any case not be able to support the access rights sought beyond SCD in 2020 and we wish to make it clear that any sale of rights until this date should not imply any presumption of access rights beyond that date. We recognise that such a short duration of rights does not reflect what was sought in the application and may not represent a satisfactory position for Grand Central.

Aside from this general position, there are a number of additional items of concern which would need to be resolved in the order for rights until May 2020 to be supported and these are set out below.

Firstly, with regard to Section 4.2 of the application form regarding Adequacy, Network Rail has not yet been able to accommodate the paths sought by Grand Central which Grand Central believed to be compliant. Furthermore, it is noted that the paths are currently foul of Section 5 engineering access requirements. The parties met to discuss the access rights on 1st June 2018 and Network Rail will continue to work with Grand Central to try to resolve the question of capacity. Further work may enable solutions to be identified, however in the absence of compliant paths, our ability to undertake further analysis is limited. In the event that compliant paths were identified Network Rail would wish to assure itself that an acceptable level of performance could be achieved.



A particular risk in the operation of these services arises from the proposal to split and join train portions at Doncaster, a location at which such moves do not currently take place. In order to assess this risk Grand Central and Network Rail met at Doncaster on 4th April 2018 to consider operational and performance consequences. Further to this meeting, Grand Central and Network Rail will be meeting on 14th June 2018 to discuss prior to the running of test trains on an evening during the summer of 2018. The test trains will allow the parties to explore the physical practicality of making the proposed moves, however it is recognised that there may be additional performance concerns to then be addressed, particularly in relation to extended platform occupation if an incoming train portion is delayed and it is necessary to hold a portion that has arrived in a platform as a consequence. As Doncaster has limited through platform capacity, this is a concern that would need to be fully explored.

In the event that the above points could be resolved, some additional points would then need to be addressed. At present Grand Central operates single unit 5 car trains that can be accommodated in all platforms at London Kings Cross. The operation of two unit 10 car trains presents constraints which would need to be resolved as not all platforms can accommodate trains of this length. An analysis of level crossing risk will also be required, however these points cannot be addressed in detail in the absence of compliant train paths. Network Rail will continue to work cooperatively with Grand Central.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Garner
Customer Manager

Copy to:

Sean English
Grand Central Railway Company Limited,
3rd Floor, Northern House,
Rougier Street,
York, YO1 6HZ
✂