

Chris Brandon

Subject: FW: Great North Western Railway Company Ltd (Trading as Grand Central) - Section 18 consultation 1304c16

From: John Sears [<mailto:John.Sears@Transportfocus.org.uk>]
Sent: 17 April 2015 11:23
To: Gilliland Rachel
Cc: Ian Yeowart
Subject: Re: Great North Western Railway Company Ltd (Trading as Grand Central) - Section 18 consultation 1304c16

Thank you for sending Transport Focus details of the Great North Western Railway Co.'s application for a track access contract, and for sending the notional timetables. They note that:

it replicates the Blackpool North rights sought in an application made in June 2014, and which were granted by Network Rail;
it applies for rights for ten years, to begin in December, 2017;
the rolling stock to be used, six-car "Pendolinos", can be delivered two years after ordering;
electrification to Blackpool North is planned for completion in May, 2017.

Transport Focus's reply to the June 2014 application, o/r 1106e15, as Passenger Focus, concluded:

There is no doubt that the return of through services between London and Blackpool is an aspiration for many.... Passenger Focus are broadly in favour of the new rights being granted, subject to following:

.....New proposals should not take precedence over the resolution of existing gaps in user needs.

It is important to plan a route in its entirety; the granting of new track access rights should not significantly frustrate the industry's subsequent ability to develop a timetable that maximises capacity, and utility to passengers.

Consequently Passenger Focus looks forward to seeing how the proposed new services will fit into the revised WCML timetable.

Transport Focus's position is unchanged, and they look forward to more consultation over those details of the application, such as the timetables, that directly affect passengers. Of course, without sight of the timetables of the other TOCs that will be operating on the route it is impossible at present to check how this application will fit with them. However, the application does offer passengers benefits that are not presently available.

Regards,

John Sears.

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