

NXEC Trains Limited - Proposed 23rd Supplemental agreement and new track access contract (SLC2 Timetable): CrossCountry Trains' response.

CrossCountry reluctantly has no alternative but to oppose NXEC's application, as we have not seen a timetable that demonstrates its deliverability nor its impact on our services, future aspirations or performance.

We note, however that NXEC propose to operate 5 trains per hour on top of other (open access) operators' virtually hourly service and existing freight services and that the ECML RUS implies that this level of service, even if it could be accommodated, would worsen performance.

In these circumstances, even an application for quantum and calling patterns seems premature, let alone the detailed journey times, departure intervals etc. being sought.

We recognise that a re-write of the ECML timetable represents a significant opportunity for the industry and would expect NR to work with us, as we are willing to do with other industry partners, in developing the detail so that it reflects our aspirations for our SLC2 December 2008 timetable (which is not yet finalised and with which we have a number of issues) and longer term for 2 XC trains per hour via Leeds and across Peterborough and for faster standard paths throughout.

We would hope that the application would be resubmitted with the relevant detail only after a viable detailed timetable has been developed and its consequences for all operators and their aspirations fully understood.

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