

Our Ref:
Your Ref:

Jonathan Cooper, Head of Contracts
Alliance Rail Holdings

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Dear Jonathan

Proposed Track Access Contract under Section 17 of the Railways Act between Alliance Rail Holdings (operating as Grand Southern Railway) and Network Rail Infrastructure Limited

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your application to operate passenger services between Southampton Central and London Waterloo.

Due to the lack of timetable detail in the application we must object to the application as we are unable to assess the potential impact on our existing services over the route between Southampton Central and Basingstoke. We are also surprised that, even off-peak, it is considered that there is sufficient capacity to run additional passenger services as recent work for the Wessex Route Study suggests there are no additional paths without severely impacting on train performance.

The Department for Transport has funded work, approximately £80m, through the Strategic Freight Network to allow the operation of longer, heavier freight trains to/from the port of Southampton. The work is due for completion by the end of CP5 and Network Rail is undertaking timetable work to seek to accommodate the running of 1800tonne, 775m long trains on the route and this must be taken into consideration prior to the start of any further passenger services.

The port of Southampton is the second largest in the UK and is a vital part of the local and UK economy, as well as supporting the UK supply chain. Work by the Rail Delivery Group has shown that the UK rail freight industry delivers economic benefits worth £1.6bn and transport goods worth £30bn. These benefits fall outside the railway balance sheet but, nonetheless must be factored into any decision on the use of capacity.

Therefore before withdrawing our objection we would like to see detailed timetabling and capacity modelling work that would allow your proposed services to work. We look forward to seeing this detail.

Yours sincerely



Chris Wilson
Rail Strategy Manager
Freightliner Group Limited

CC Craig Tomlin, Network Rail
Rachel Gilliland, Network Rail
Georgina Collinge, Network Rail