

TravelWatch NORTHWEST

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promoting quality public transport.....

Feras Alshaker
 Head of Access and Licensing
 Office of Rail and Road
 One Kemble Street
 London
 WC2B 4AN

13th November 2019

Dear Feras,

Access to the West Coast Main Line (WCML)

TravelWatch NorthWest is an independent Community Interest Company representing all public transport users in North West England. I am taking the liberty of briefly commenting on your letter of 11th October on this subject, although we were not included in the distribution list.

Additional London Euston – Liverpool Lime St services

We welcome more services on this route. A half hourly service in itself is a vast improvement on the current hourly pattern. Services should call at Liverpool South Parkway. Integrated ticketing between the franchisee and any Open Access Operator would be useful.

Grand Union Trains Euston - Stirling

We would like to see the Euston – Stirling service call at, at least, some stations between Preston and Carlisle, particularly Lancaster and possibly Oxenholme.

Capacity issues

Clearly there will be a need to assess capacity issues as alluded to in your paragraphs 4 to 6. We are aware of intimations that the WCML is full (south of Crewe?). Can all of the open access services to Liverpool, Blackpool and Stirling, plus a half-hourly frequency to Liverpool, be accommodated?

One further capacity constraint we are aware of is at Lancaster. Under its franchise, we understand, Northern has to provide a train arriving from the Leeds line into Lancaster between 8 and 9 a.m. This would enable passengers from the east to commute to work in Lancaster for the first time in many years, but this has been refused for the December 2019 timetable by

North West Public Transport Users' Forum Community Interest Company trading as TravelWatch NorthWest
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Network Rail due to lack of capacity on the WCML between Carnforth and Lancaster. We believe that Northern is to make an alternative application for the May 2020 timetable. A path may become available with new, faster TPE and Northern rolling stock (Class195s)?

HS2

Clearly the whole service pattern will have to be reviewed should HS2 go ahead. We have concerns about long term service patterns and calling patterns of through HS2 or conventional services to London from Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire. We certainly wish to be included in relevant discussions as those plans develop.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely,

John

John Moorhouse
Company Secretary