

GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS

Consultation on the future access framework

Templates for Commitments and Planning

This document has been created to support the Access and Use Policy consultation in September 2026 by explaining some of the key products referred to in that Policy in more detail. The last section of this document includes copies of the consultation questions which are on the forms linked from the consultation web page for ease of reference.

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1. Introduction – how the documents fit together

1.1. Summary

The Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule are important components of the decision-making framework set out in the Access and Use Policy. They are not policy documents in their own right. Rather, they are the principal products through which GBR would record, communicate and implement some of the decisions taken under the Access and Use Policy. They provide the documentation which underpins a transparent and structured framework for translating long-term railway planning into operational delivery, moving from future planning and capacity allocation decisions, through to contracted commitments and inputs to the Working Timetable.

1.2. Planning Schedule

The Planning Schedule is the document through which GBR records and schedules major change projects (timetable change projects similar to today's Events). The projects will review and change how railway capacity is classified and allocated under the Access and Use Policy.

The Planning Schedule will take the form of a register of planning projects. Each entry will outline the outputs and benefits being sought, the enablers available, and the decision-making milestones that need to be adhered to.

The Planning Schedule will provide a forward view of planning projects that are underway or proposed, giving operators, funders, and stakeholders visibility of future capacity allocation activity. Additionally, it will provide a historical record of completed projects. Completed entries will reference associated documentation, including GBR's decisions, with the supporting rationale and implementation information, allowing parties to understand how capacity allocation decisions have evolved over time.

The Planning Schedule is not intended to be a pipeline of future investments, enhancement schemes, or wider business change programmes. That role sits with activity described in chapter 5 of the Access and Use Policy and documentation such as that produced by the long-term planning process. Instead, the Planning Schedule serves as the register of planning projects that make the capacity allocation changes required to realise industry benefits, outputs and outcomes.

We anticipate GBR should use a regular industry sounding group to support the ongoing management of the Planning Schedule.

1.3. Capacity Plan

The Capacity Plan is GBR's statutory record of how, in its view, the best use can be made of the railway determined in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out in the Access and Use Policy.

In practical terms, the Capacity Plan is a service specification document that classifies the system's capacity. It classifies capacity by categories of use, such as GBR passenger services,

devolved public passenger services, private passenger services, freight services and international freight services. Capacity is documented by geography, timing, operating characteristics, and intended use. These are referred to in the Access and Use Policy as “parameters”.

The template shared as part of this consultation will initially be populated to form the initial Capacity Plan for GBR. The initial plan will mirror the specificity of rights held in access contracts due to the practical limitations of a translation process that must respect existing access rights.

After the terms of the existing rights have expired, the limitations created by the translation process will be removed. Parameters of the classified capacity may at that stage be made more specific so that it will be clearer to identify compatibility between classified capacity and proposed updates to the Capacity Plan. Making such changes would require formal updates or revisions to be made to the Capacity Plan by GBR following the processes set out in the Access and Use Policy in due course. This is likely to be an important early project for GBR, as a more specific and granular Capacity Plan has the potential to deliver to significant benefit for the management of GBR’s railway – subject to later industry engagement to explore how best to balance flexibility with certainty.

A description of how the initial Capacity Plan will be formed is contained section 4.

1.4. Commitments Register

The Commitments Register is the mechanism through which the capacity classifications contained within the Capacity Plan are committed to specific parties. It records capacity commitments held by train operators, freight customers, public authorities, and GBR itself.

Capacity Commitments provide contractual assurance to relevant parties that specified capacity will be available for a defined period and are used to give priority for inclusion during timetable production via Part D of the GBR Code. GBR holds Capacity Commitments for GBR-operated passenger services.

1.5. End-to-end framework

The three Decision Documents discussed here, together with the long-term planning products and other industry planning activity which sit ‘up-stream’ from the Planning Schedule, and the contracting and Part D planning processes, form an end-to-end framework which is illustrated in Figure 1.

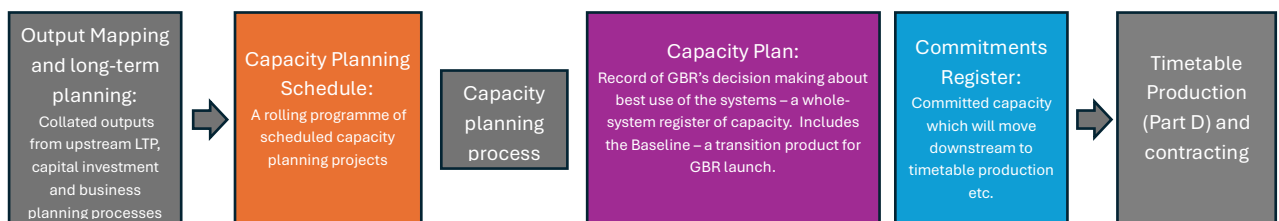


Figure 1: template documents within framework

- Long-term planning documentation (not discussed in this document) constitutes an integrated, prospective pipeline of future railway outputs, investments and change programmes.
- The Planning Schedule records and manages the planning projects required to evaluate those changes and make recommendations to update the Capacity Plan.
- The Capacity Plan records GBR's allocation of railway capacity.
- The Capacity Commitments Register allocates that capacity to specific parties as capacity commitments.
- Finally, the Working Timetable gives practical effect to those commitments through the timetabling processes set out in Part D of the GBR Code.

2. Template development and how to read them

2.1. Methodology to develop the document templates

Initial concept development and prototype templates were prepared by Network Rail's Capacity Planning Team to explore how future GBR planning and capacity documents might operate.

Winder Phillips Associates (WPA) were subsequently commissioned to undertake a detailed review and industry engagement exercise. WPA adopted a three-phase approach. In summary the three phases comprised:

- Review of the policy, gap analysis (based on the documents produced by Capacity Planning), development of improved data specifications, and development of an industry engagement plan.
- Conducted peer review and industry engagement, collated feedback, considered an outline methodology for how to convert Schedule 5 data into the Commitments Register.
- Reviewed feedback, revised data specifications accordingly, and created draft documents with small sample data sets.

2.2. Intentions for additional development

2.2.1. Continued development of the templates

We intend to continue refining and developing the data specifications for the Planning Schedule, Capacity Plan and Commitments Register. The specifications shared alongside this consultation represent the current stage of development rather than finalised designs.

Further work will consider how the three specifications operate together, how they align with the developing Access and Use Policy and wider GBR design, and whether any changes are needed to ensure that the documents are clear, practical and capable of supporting decision-making in operation.

Responses to this consultation will form an important part of that development. We will review the evidence and views received and use them, alongside further policy, operational and technical work, to inform subsequent revisions to the data specifications and the associated document templates.

2.2.2. Data solution

Work so far has defined the templates and data requirements for the three documents, but not the system needed to manage them. We have therefore started a development programme to identify a proportionate and robust data solution, considering both internal development and external procurement. We'd like the solution to provide a single source for Planning Schedule, Capacity Plan and Commitments Register data, with a reliable link to the detailed timetable data used to produce the Working Timetable.

2.3. The templates themselves

The following files are shared alongside this consultation document.

- 3.2 Capacity Plan Example.xlsx
- 3.3 Commitments Register Example.xlsx
- 3.4 Capacity Plan and Commitments Register Data Specification.xlsx
- 3.5 Planning Schedule Example.xlsx
- 3.6 Planning Schedule Data Specification.xlsx

The following subsections briefly introduce each file, explain how to read it and outline some of the thinking behind its structure.

All data contained within the examples is purely illustrative and is not intended to reflect capacity allocation now or in the future.

2.3.1. Capacity Plan template example

To record capacity allocation to different uses the Capacity Plan template contains rows that articulate specific flows on the network along with the key data to characterise those flows. Unique reference numbers (column E) assist in referring to entries in the table and support the automation of workflows using the data.

The Classification fields in columns F to H give effect to the classification intent in the Access and Use Policy.

The combination of fields to permit description of characteristics currently used to describe the access rights of passenger and freight services allows the entries to be held in a single register. This eases the interpretation of the data by planners and analysts by making it easier to see the capacity allocation by Line of Route (LOR – column T).

2.3.2. Commitments Register example

The Commitments Register is very similar in structure to the Capacity Plan and the section below expands on why this is. The articulation of capacity is consistent between both products but with additional columns to identify the specific organisation the capacity is

committed to (column M) and information about the duration of the commitment (columns O and P).

2.3.3. Capacity Plan and Commitments Register data specification

The Capacity Plan and the Commitments Register will principally contain train service specification data. To promote consistency between the two documents, a common data specification has been developed and applied to both. However, not every data field will be required or appropriate in every context. For that reason, the specification includes columns showing whether each field will be included in each document.

Also, we want to ensure that the governance and change-control requirements applied to each field are proportionate to its legal and policy significance. Where data records a capacity allocation decision or forms part of a contractual commitment, any amendment may affect the substance of GBR's decision or the rights and obligations of the parties and must therefore follow the relevant decision-making or contractual change process. By contrast, fields that provide supporting, descriptive or administrative information should be capable of being maintained without unnecessarily reopening the underlying capacity decision or contractual commitment.

When reviewing the data specification worksheet (called Capacity Plan and Commitments Register Data Specification.xlsx) respondents should consider the following for each data field:

- whether the field is applicable to the Capacity Plan or the Commitments Register, (or both), as indicated in columns J and P of the worksheet;
- whether the field must be populated, may optionally be populated, or cannot be populated, considered separately for each document and for passenger operators and freight operators, as indicated in columns L, N, R and T;
- for the Capacity Plan, whether a change to the field would constitute a capacity decision by GBR which needs to be governed by the policy, or whether the field may be amended without requiring a GBR decision, as indicated in columns K and M; and
- for the Commitments Register, whether a change to the field would constitute a change to the contractual commitment itself, or whether the field may be amended without requiring a contractual change, as indicated in columns Q and S.

We are still developing the options for the data model that will underpin the Capacity Plan and the Commitments Register. However, it is our intention that the data model will be capable of holding service specification data to represent decisions already made and proposed entries for which decision-making is still in progress. Further work is required to refine the terminology used for these statuses and the data model that will underpin the documents. However, the principle is that proposed capacity classifications (whether included in major update projects or minor amendments), and proposed capacity commitments, may be recorded while the relevant decision remains pending.

A status of **Adopted** in this context means that the required decision-making has been completed and the classification or commitment has been formally incorporated into the Capacity Plan or Commitments Register. Records described provisionally as **Aspirational** would indicate proposals that have not yet completed the relevant decision-making process and therefore do not form part of the adopted Capacity Plan or Commitments Register.

“Aspirational” is a working term and may be replaced as the wording and data model are developed.

We have included in the Capacity Plan and Commitments Register data specification a table listing every operator and assigning its services to a particular classification. We do not intend that, in future, every service operated by a single operator or business unit would necessarily be assigned the same classification. The lookup table is included solely to support the examples and to illustrate, at a high level, our emerging thinking about how individual train services might be classified in future. The classifications and their application will be refined through further policy and data-model development.

2.3.4. Planning Schedule example

In common with the other documents a unique reference number is provided to support easy reference of items on the schedule and the change control of those entries.

Each row covers a major update project and provides information like the project title (column F), the status of that project (column G) and the critical and conditional outputs (columns H and I respectively).

Please note that all information provided in the example is purely for illustrative purposes and should not be used to infer the status of any project now or in the future.

A “key” worksheet is provided within the workbook to explain the colour-coding of fields within the worksheet.

2.3.5. Planning Schedule data specification

The Planning Schedule data specification is more straightforward to read than the combined Capacity Plan and Commitments Register specification, as it applies to a single document and does not require the same distinctions between capacity decisions, contractual commitments and supporting data on a field-by-field basis.

Each entry in the “Header” field (column E) represents a column in the Planning Schedule example and the adjacent cells along the row provide an explanation of what the field is capturing and what the options for the user are in filling that field.

3. How the documents relate to the policy

GBR’s capacity allocation decisions are listed in chapter 2 of the Access and Use Policy, under the heading ‘GBR’s capacity allocation decisions’. Not all of these decisions have an impact on the three documents, and we’ve highlighted where this is and is not the case in Table 1. Where GBR decisions are captured in one of the three documents the relevant section of the policy is noted in the 3rd column of the table.

Decisions made in line with the policy which impact the Capacity Plan or the Commitments Register then lead to an update to those documents.

Decisions impacting the Planning Schedule warrant particular discussion. The Planning Schedule provides the change-control mechanism for major changes to the Capacity Plan (GBR's statement of the best use of the rail system). Accordingly, the section following this table explains how the Planning Schedule supports the decisions made under the Access and Use Policy about scheduling, developing and deciding major changes to the Capacity Plan.

GBR Decision (from Access and Use Policy Part A, Chapter 2)	Relevant decision document	Relevant section of Access and Use Policy
Capacity Plan updates and revisions:		
To propose a major update to the Capacity Plan;	Planning Schedule	Part C, Chapter 7
To determine the critical railway outputs and scope of a major update;	Planning Schedule	
To revise the Capacity Plan following a major update project; or	Planning Schedule and Capacity Plan	
To make a minor revision to the Capacity Plan.	Capacity Plan	
Agreeing and updating access contracts:		
To enter into or amend an access contract;	Not relevant to these docs	Part C, Chapter 8
To update model access contracts and terms, or the GBR Code.	Not relevant to these docs	
Applications for contracted capacity commitments:		
To approve, modify or reject an application for a new or amended capacity commitment, including determining its duration and conditions.	Commitments Register	Part C, Chapter 6
Making and changing capacity commitments held by GBR:		
To make or modify a GBR capacity commitment, including determining its duration and conditions	Commitments Register	Part C, Chapter 6
Timetable production and variation:		
To define the timetable rules (asset capability; operational, performance and engineering work requirements).	Not relevant to these docs	Part C, Chapter 9
To accept, vary or reject an application for a timetable path or for a variation of the timetable.	Not relevant to these docs	

Table 1 - The GBR Capacity Decisions and their relevance to the Decision Documents

3.1. The role of the Planning Schedule in more detail

In the third field of the Planning Schedule, **Project Status**, GBR will record which stage of the planning cycle the project has reached. This is the key indicator for GBR's progress in making decisions to update or revise the Capacity Plan. The statuses are listed as follows:

- Scope incomplete
- Scope mature and project proposed
- Scope determined
- Project underway
- Project completed

There are three decisions listed under Capacity Plan Updates and Revisions in the Access and Use Policy which are relevant to these project statuses, and which are described in the following sections.

3.1.1. Scope incomplete

The first Project Status option – Scope Incomplete – represents the first entry of the project onto the Planning Schedule, and is referred to as such in the Access and Use Policy. This entry indicates that a planning project's scope is still being developed. No decision to formally propose and consult on a major update has been made. Projects at this stage in their planning process are included so that proposals for projects can be co-ordinated transparently, and so that relevant decisions about commitments or minor revisions can be appropriately informed by expected future changes.

GBR will assign a key date to each project, called the **Project Maturity Milestone**, recorded in field 11 of the Planning Schedule data specification. This is the latest date by which GBR expects to make the first decision in Table 1: **to propose a major update to the capacity plan** (per Chapter 7 of the Access and Use Policy). The Project Maturity Milestone does not itself constitute a decision and it is not governed by the Access and Use Policy or any contract. The intended benefit of this milestone is that it focuses the industry's attention on developing a mature project scope in time for GBR to make a proposal decision and to open consultation on that project scope.

At a summary level, a mature project scope would include the following:

- the proposed critical railway outputs and contingent outputs;
- timetable enablers for those outputs (in the form of detailed proposals to add, amend or remove classifications in the Capacity Plan);
- relevant infrastructure, rolling stock and operational enablers;
- the project's geographic scope and any adjacent projects it may interface with; and,
- the lead business unit, a Project Reference Group and stakeholders to be consulted.

Once GBR have made a decision to propose a major update, the project's status will be changed to 'Scope mature and project proposed'.

3.1.2. Scope mature and Project proposed

Once a major update project has been proposed by GBR, the scope of that project will be consulted. GBR will consider the responses to the consultation and any additional evidence

submitted before making the second decision in Table 1: **To determine the critical railway outputs and scope of a major update.**

Once this decision is made, the Project Status in the Planning Schedule will be updated to 'Scope Determined'. The policy for this determination is in Chapter 7 of the Access and Use Policy.

3.1.3. Scope determined

The 'Scope Determined' status indicates that the project has been sufficiently defined and that the decision-making required under the Access and Use Policy has been completed, meaning the project is authorised and ready to start. However, project activity has not yet begun. The status is therefore an administrative placeholder between completion of the relevant pre-project decision-making and commencement of the project itself.

3.1.4. Project underway

The Lead Business Unit (noted in Field 14 of the Planning Schedule) will work with the Project Reference Group (field 15) to operate a planning project. (Note, these roles are not defined in the policy but are included in the Planning Schedule).

The project will test proposals to amend the classifications in the Capacity Plan and see whether they can deliver the Critical Railway Outputs and any Contingent Outputs. Once project work begins, the status in the Planning Schedule will change to Project Underway – please note this does not constitute a decision under the Access and Use Policy. The policy about project work to test options is in Chapter 7 of the Access and Use Policy.

At the conclusion of the project, GBR will propose a Capacity Plan decision to amend the Capacity Plan. Analysis and documentation will be provided with GBR's rationale.

After a period of consultation, GBR will make the third decision in Table 1, **to revise the Capacity Plan following a major update project**, and will make the necessary amendments to the Capacity Plan. At this point, the status in the Planning Schedule is updated to 'Project Completed'. The policy for making the decision to revise the Capacity Plan is in Chapter 7 of the AUP.

3.1.5. Projects completed

After the project is completed, any decision-making documentation, (including the proposed decision, rationale, consultation material and the final decision) can be appended to the project in the Planning Schedule (note Field 8). The project will then remain in the Planning Schedule, so that over time GBR will accumulate a record of major update decisions which can be referred back to.

3.2. Note about change controls for minor amendments to the Capacity Plan and changes to the Commitments Register

The Access and Use Policy explicitly requires a change-control document where major changes to the Capacity Plan are proposed. This document is the Planning Schedule. However, the Access and Use Policy does not explicitly require equivalent change-control

documents to manage applications or proposals for minor amendments to the Capacity Plan, or applications and proposals relating to commitments in the Commitments Register. Nevertheless, we intend to develop appropriate mechanisms for recording and managing pending decisions in both circumstances.

It is our intention that there should be comprehensive records of decisions to change the Capacity Plan and the Commitments Register. In this way historic amendments to those documents will be fully auditable.

Wherever possible, we also intend to ensure that the data used to manage these change controls is consistent. For example, applications or proposals to make minor amendments to the Capacity Plan could be held in the same data format as the Planning Schedule (where major changes are captured). This will enable the major and minor changes to be cross-referenced and read together easily.

4. Populating the initial Capacity Plan

Section 60 of the Railways Act requires GBR to prepare and maintain a Capacity Plan setting out its view of how best use can be made of GBR infrastructure for the operation of trains. GBR proposes to have an initial Capacity Plan ready to adopt when it begins exercising its access functions under the Act.

We propose that the initial version of the Capacity Plan is formed by collating firm access rights held by train operators for access to Network Rail's network and then classifying that capacity appropriately. Firm access rights in force when GBR assumes responsibility for access decisions will be included. These will be linked to the corresponding entries in the Commitments Register as the data between the two is connected explained in section 2.3.3.

This approach means that contingent rights would not form part of the Capacity Plan, noting that they would feature in the Commitments Register and remain in force through contracts. This reflects that they do not represent a settled view of how to commit capacity on the network. Parties that currently benefit from such contingent commitments or run with a generic contingent access right remain important to securing value from the railway. As set out in the Access and Use Policy, they will continue to have similar protections in the new model as in the existing model, with specific policy arrangements in place to protect continuity for end users, and measures that allow operators to make applications.

A process of verification will take place with affected contractual parties to check that all operators and services have been captured, including GBR-operated passenger services. The verification of existing firm rights is a factual exercise and therefore would not require wider industry or public consultation.

The adoption of the draft Capacity Plan will be a decision for the GBR Board, taken in accordance with GBR's legal obligations. The initial Capacity Plan will then provide a stable and transparent baseline for the changes which GBR can start to apply when exercising its access functions.

This approach takes account of ministerial undertakings that existing access rights contained within Schedule 5 of track access contracts will continue to be given effect until they expire.

Network Rail has considered the proposed approach against the duties that will apply to GBR under sections 16, 17 and 18 of the Act, the Chapter 2 considerations and section 60(4). Network Rail considers that planning assurance, continuity for passenger and freight services and railway performance, and avoiding unnecessary disruption, cost and uncertainty in the public interest are particularly relevant. This proposal reflects our view that carrying forward existing firm allocations would provide a stable baseline, while leaving the GBR Board to reach its own view of best use under its statutory duties. Inclusion would not protect classifications from later revision through the AUP, and does not prevent applications, revisions or updates.

This consultation seeks views on the proposed approach. Responses will inform recommendations to the GBR Board on the content and adoption of the initial Capacity Plan.

Affected parties and consultees are encouraged to provide their views on this approach to populating the initial GBR Capacity Plan as part of their responses to this consultation. They should note there may not be later consultation on this approach, or the populated Capacity Plan, at a later stage before adoption. This is in the context of a policy that allows specific changes to that Plan to be proposed and applications to be made immediately following adoption.

5. Frequently asked questions

How often will the Planning Schedule be published?

We have not yet fully developed our thinking as to how frequently the Planning Schedule will be published. It could be published to a specific schedule, or it could be maintained as a live document.

Who will administer and maintain the Planning Schedule, Capacity Plan and Commitments Register?

These will all be maintained by GBR.

What will the change control process be for all three baseline planning documents?

The Policy itself describes the change control processes at a high level. The detailed, technical arrangements for the Planning Schedule, Capacity Plan and Commitments Register (including data assurances etc) are still being developed but will adhere to relevant sections of the Policy.

How will the documents be split / filtered geographically?

Our draft proposal is that all three baseline planning documents will be able to be filtered by GBR route and LOR (Line of Route) codes e.g. Western Route, GW103 Paddington to

Uffington & GW105.1-GW105.3 Uffington to Wootton Bassett Jn for a project / commitments / capacity which covered Paddington to Swindon.

Where will the documents be published?

The Planning Schedule, Capacity Plan and the Commitments Register will be published on GBR's website. We don't anticipate that all data will be published and we are still developing our thinking about exactly what would be included.

As an example, the published Planning Schedule on GBR's website might only include planning projects where GBR has already made a decision to propose the project. Other 'Work in Progress' project scopes would be hidden from public view, but available to an industry internal audience.

We anticipate lots of opportunities to filter and choose which records and fields are published publicly. We have included a question in the consultation survey about publishing the documents.

Who will be able to access them?

The documents will be publicly accessible to everyone online. We are also considering mechanisms to publish additional information to industry internal audiences.

We are considering whether certain information may be able to be filtered if confidential to only appear to those working within the rail industry, but we expect this to be applied only in exceptional circumstances.

Will a percentage of capacity utilisation be shown on the Capacity Plan?

No. GBR will not publish any capacity utilisation data with the Capacity Plan.

However, the new Capacity Plan could provide a foundation for improved analysis of train service provision across GBR's network. We intend to explore business intelligence reporting centred on Capacity Plan data and, where beneficial, combining it with other relevant industry data sources. We have included a question in the consultation survey inviting views on the opportunities this could create and the capabilities stakeholders would find most valuable.

Can passenger & freight services be shown on the same tab on the Capacity Plan and Commitments Register?

We expect that the documents will be able to be filtered such that they can appear together or separately depending on the users' requirements. How will the Commitments Register be populated initially?

Current rights will be populated from Schedule 5 tables and then updated with any changes made between the point of population and GBR adopting its access mandate. The precise mechanism for this is still being developed. Please also see the consultation survey question about the baseline Commitments Register.

How will the Capacity Plan be populated initially?

We propose that the Capacity Plan will be populated using the information on existing firm rights held by train operators, with each categorised according to the classifications set out in the Access and Use Policy. See section 2.3.1 for a fuller explanation.

How will the Planning Schedule be populated initially?

The Planning Schedule will be populated using the information available to Network Rail which is drawn from the Calendar of Events, programme integration activity in Network Rail and through existing regular communication with funders, regional stakeholders and train operators.

I have XXXX (bespoke clause) in my Schedule 5 tables, will this be reflected in the Commitments Register?

Yes, we will ensure that current rights and clauses are accommodated.

How many Capacity Plans will there be?

One. It will be a single document which is iteratively updated via the major update or minor revision processes.

What is the difference between the Commitments Register and the Commitments Register? Similarly, what is the difference between the Capacity Plan and the Capacity Plan?

In our documentation and correspondence, we sometimes refer to the Capacity Plan or the Commitments Register as shorter references to the Infrastructure Capacity Plan or the Commitments Register. In each case, they are the same thing.

6. Consultation questions

The questions below replicate the questions which are available on the Network Rail website for electronic response via Microsoft Forms. They are provided here altogether for ease of reference. Please note we can only accept responses via the Microsoft Form provided.

You do not need to answer every question. Please focus on the matters that are relevant to you and on which you have knowledge, experience or evidence.

When responding in the form, please explain the reasons for your answers and provide supporting evidence or practical examples where possible. Responses will be particularly helpful where they:

- identify the relevant chapter, paragraph or consultation question;
- explain the practical effect of the proposal;
- distinguish whether the point concerns policy intent, legal effect, clarity, implementation, transition, governance, commercial impact or operational workability;

- identify the parties, services or circumstances affected; and
- suggest an alternative approach or drafting where appropriate.

Some questions relate to areas covered by other consultation documents and response forms. Where another consultation form is identified as the main place for detailed comments, please provide your detailed response there.

Where a concern arises from the relationship between different parts of the consultation, please identify the relevant provisions and explain how they interact. You do not need to repeat the same detailed response in more than one consultation form.

Questions 1 to 4

These are data-gathering questions about the respondent and are not repeated here.

Question 5

GBR proposes to have an initial Capacity Plan ready to adopt when it begins exercising its access functions under the Act. The initial version of the Capacity Plan will be formed by collating firm access rights held by train operators for access to Network Rail's network and then classifying that capacity appropriately. Access rights in force when GBR assumes responsibility for access decisions will be included. There will be corresponding entries in the Commitments Register as the data between the two is inter-linked as explained in section 2.3.3 of the consultation document.

Would using the approach outlined in the consultation document to establishing, verifying and adopting the initial Capacity Plan be appropriate for GBR in light of its duties to consider Best Use? Please identify any considerations you think should be made when drawing together the initial Capacity Plan to enable the plan to accurately reflect capacity allocation just before GBR commences its access functions.

Question 6

We have developed proposed data specifications and templates for the three key decision-making products that GBR intends to maintain and publish: the Capacity Plan, Commitments Register, and Planning Schedule. These products are intended to provide a transparent and enduring record of capacity allocation decisions, commitments and planning assumptions, while supporting the needs of a wide range of railway users and stakeholders.

To what extent do you consider that the proposed data specifications for these products will support your organisation's future needs?

Question 7

GBR intends to publish the Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule on its public website to support transparency and understanding of capacity allocation decisions. The information contained within these products varies in significance and level of detail. Some information may be operational, commercial or otherwise sensitive, while

other information may support wider stakeholder understanding and confidence in GBR's decision-making.

To what extent do you support the publication of information within these products, and are there any data fields that you consider should not be published because of commercial, operational or other sensitivities?

Questions 8 and 9

The industry will prepare a baseline Commitments Register which GBR can adopt when it assumes its access mandate. Our central principle is that all rights (and all characteristics of rights) contained within existing access agreements between operators and Network Rail should be reflected in the baseline register adopted by GBR. This approach is intended to provide continuity, preserve existing rights and obligations, and minimise unnecessary disruption during transition to the new framework.

Do you agree that the baseline Commitments Register should, as a general principle, reflect the access rights and commitments contained within existing contractual arrangements?

Please provide reasons and supporting evidence where possible.

Question 10 and 11

Do you consider that the proposed structure and data fields of the Commitments Register are sufficient to represent and protect all material aspects of those rights without loss of meaning, certainty or enforceability?

Please provide reasons and supporting evidence where possible.

Question 12

The scope of the Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule is limited to decisions made under GBR's Access and Use Policy and therefore focuses on capacity allocation and access rights relating to the GBR railway. However, some stakeholders have suggested that there may be value in including additional information relating to services and infrastructure beyond the GBR railway where this would improve understanding of the wider transport system.

This could include, for example, information relating to adjacent infrastructure managers or connecting transport services such as bus and ferry operations. For clarity, train services that cross the boundary between GBR infrastructure and an adjacent infrastructure manager would continue to be reflected in the products where relevant to GBR's decision-making. Any information included solely to provide wider context would be for information purposes only and would not form part of GBR's decision-making framework under the Access and Use Policy.

To what extent do you consider it useful for the Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule to include information beyond the GBR railway for contextual and information purposes?

Question 13

The Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule are intended to become the principal records of GBR's capacity allocation decisions and train service specifications. At their simplest, these products could remain as structured datasets and published tables that are maintained manually. Alternatively, they could be supported by more integrated digital solutions, with data flowing automatically from planning systems and additional functionality developed to improve how the industry accesses, analyses and uses train service specification data to visualise progress towards strategic targets.

What are your views on the desired technical approach for the Capacity Plan, Commitments Register and Planning Schedule, and what opportunities are you aware of in the systems space which could be considered?

Questions 14 and 15

Do you have any other comments on templates for commitments and planning that you have not provided in response to an earlier question?

Please provide any additional comments below.