



Transport and Works Act  
Great Central Railway (East Leake Branch,  
etc.) Order 2000 ("the 2000 Order").

Consultation to vary hours of operation for heritage passenger trains.

Conducted September / October 2025.

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Cover image:

A Great Central Railway (Nottingham) train passes East Leake. In the distance is the British Gypsum factory alongside the line.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Overview

The Great Central Railway (Nottingham) (GCR(N)) is a mainly heritage passenger line which has statutory powers to operate along part of the route of the former Great Central Railway main line. The railway runs from a junction with the Midland Main Line at Loughborough northward for a distance of 9 miles to the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre, near the village of Ruddington. The track passes through the village of East Leake. There is a disused station at East Leake and an open station at Rushcliffe Halt (about a mile north of the centre of East Leake). The line is also used for engineering trains, rail industry testing and training, plus occasional filming work. In the past freight trains have operated from the junction with the Midland Main Line to the British Gypsum plant adjacent to Rushcliffe Halt.

### New services

GCR(N) is developing an evening dining train. Trials have been well supported and point to this being a popular visitor attraction, generating significant income, which in turn helps secure the operation of the railway, local heritage and supports other nearby businesses.

Such experiences have proved popular and successful on many other touristic heritage railways including, for example, “Dining with Distinction” on the East Lancashire Railway, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway’s “Food on the Move” and the Bluebell Railway’s “Golden Arrow - Evening Dining”.

It is proposed the dining experience would comprise a single train operating along the line to Stanford Viaduct (almost at the southern end of the line) on two evenings per week, arriving back at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre. Although the train would pass through the former East Leake station it would not stop there and in order to comply with the proposed 10pm curfew, the latest that the returning train would travel through East Leake would be no later than 9pm, other than in an emergency situation (see main report, point 4.3).

At present, GCR(N) is unable to offer this service due to the restriction on its operating hours prescribed by Article 10(5) of the 2000 Order which provides that, except in the case of an emergency, no train other than a train being used solely for the carriage of goods, shall run on the railway before 09.00 hours or after 18.00 hours on any day without the prior written consent of the Secretary of State. Although partially relaxed in 2002 (as explained below) to allow some later weekend running on the northern part of the line, the restriction significantly limits the development of the dining train, preventing the associated economic benefits to GCR(N) and the local area.

### Reason for consultation

There is no statutory or other formal requirement for consultation to take place ahead of a request for the written consent of the Secretary of State to a change of this nature. However, a consultation exercise was carried out to inform local residents of our intention to apply for the variation to the current restrictions that is needed for the introduction of the twice weekly dining service and to invite feedback.

Consultation focussed in particular on residents living adjacent to the site of the former East Leake station. Elsewhere on the line, the train does not pass near residential areas save at Ruddington where the gardens of residential properties are further away from the railway.

There is no proposal to reopen East Leake station.

### Consultation process

A consultation event was held at East Leake village hall on Sunday 7th of September 2025. The event was publicised in the Loughborough Echo newspaper with two separate advertisements. It was also promoted through local Facebook groups, through other social media channels and on the railway's internet pages. Examples of the notice are contained in the report **(appendix one)**.

The Sunday 7th event was open between 10am and 4pm and included detailed presentations. Those attending were invited to leave comments in person at the event, or to provide their feedback (a) by email and (b) post, up until Sunday 12th of October 2025.

### Consultation summary

28 people attended the consultation day, representing 20 households **(appendix two)**. They came from alongside the line, around the village and further afield. Comments received in person **(appendix three)** and comments received via email **(appendix four)** are all mapped to give them geographical context **(appendix five)**.

In total, from all sources, there were 10 comments received supporting the proposals, 4 comments with no objection to the principle but suggesting alternative (earlier) curfew times which they would find acceptable and 3 comments received objecting to the proposals.

Comments supporting the proposals were solicited and received from a local councillor and the Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe **(appendix six)**.

Comments supporting the proposals were solicited and received from an events management company and business partner of Great Central Railway (Nottingham) **(appendix seven)**.

### Post consultation

We have developed several timetable scenarios where our evening train will complete its return journey before the proposed 10pm curfew **(appendix eight)**.

We have responded to everyone who made a comment on our proposals.

## BACKGROUND

### 1.1 The railway

The Great Central Railway opened in 1899 and was closed to passenger traffic in 1969. Freight trains continued to use the section of the line in Nottinghamshire between Loughborough, East Leake and Ruddington to serve a gypsum factory and a Ministry of Defence depot. These trains ceased in the mid-1980s. The line was not formally closed, only disused.

### 1.2 Trains resume running

From 2000 onwards the line has reopened primarily for heritage passenger trains. Between 2000 and 2020 freight trains also ran to and from the British Gypsum plant north of East Leake. During the covid pandemic, heritage passenger operations were paused, resuming along the whole length of the line in 2024.

### 1.3 Use of railway today

Heritage passenger trains run on most, but not all weekends. During school holidays, some trains are also operated during the week. These trains are predominantly worked by a two car diesel multiple unit, or consist of 3 carriages hauled by a heritage diesel or steam locomotive. In addition, occasional maintenance trains, rail industry testing and training services and filming charters operate. Locomotives also arrive from and depart to the national rail network via the junction at Loughborough.

The railway is a significant local tourist attraction. For example, for the 2025 fireworks night, 2,500 people attended. The Christmas train season in 2024 was visited by 3000 people (mainly families with young children). A typical Saturday or Sunday train operating day will be attended by between 100 and 150 people. This figure increases if there are special events which include visits by guest locomotives, vintage vehicle displays or model railway exhibitions.

Income from visitors directly supports the employment of a member of staff to manage the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre, also a franchise holder and team who operate the refreshment room on site and other local traders who visit the centre for special events.

In 2023, a briefing prepared by The Heritage Alliance for the All Party Parliamentary Group on heritage rail reported the heritage rail sector provides £600m value to the UK economy annually. (Point 9) <https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Heritage-Railways-Briefing-April-2023.pdf>

### 1.3 Use of railway today (continued)

The operating restrictions in Article 10(5) of the 2000 Order were previously relaxed with the written consent of the Secretary of State in June and November 2002. On 13 June 2002, in response to an application made by GCR(N) for that purpose, the Secretary of State consented to the running of passenger trains between the northern termination of railway No. 1 (i.e. the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre in Ruddington) and Rushcliffe Halt between the hours of 18.00 and 22.00 on Saturdays and Sundays between 1 April and 31 October. On 4 November 2022, the Secretary of State consented to the running of vintage freight vehicles between the hours of 18.00 and 21.00 on 23<sup>rd</sup> November over the same route for a specific event.

As noted above, the vast majority of people who responded to the consultation expressed support for the proposal and only a small minority were against having any relaxation of the current restrictions.

### 1.4 Social value

Besides bringing families and visitors from a wide selection of different social backgrounds together to share an experience, the railway provides a connection to its volunteer workforce. Approximately 50 - 75 volunteers from a wide range of ages are regularly involved in the operation of the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre, the standard gauge trains along the Great Central Railway (Nottingham), and the co-sited bus preservation group and model / miniature railway groups. This reduces loneliness, promotes inclusion and sharing of values and skills between generations.

### 1.5 The route of the railway

The line runs north from a junction with the national rail network at Loughborough. It passes over Stanford viaduct, then East Leake village (and a disused station). About a mile after the disused station is Rushcliffe Halt, an open station situated alongside the active gypsum mine and factory. The railway then crosses Gotham Moor. Just south of the village of Ruddington, trains reverse and enter the station at Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre. The total route length is approximately nine miles. **(Figure 1, page 8)**. A train takes approximately 40 minutes to make a single journey from one end of the line to the other. Our new evening dining train would utilise the entire length of the line.

### 1.6. Former East Leake station

The former East Leake village station was closed in 1969. While the platforms survive, the buildings have been demolished. The goods yard of the station (immediately north east) was developed for housing. This street is called Rope Walk. On the north west side of this road 14 properties have gardens which directly abut the railway.

When the application was made to reinstate the railway, a restriction to prevent the use of the former station for purposes of alighting and disembarking passengers was imposed. The relaxation of operating restrictions being sought by GCR(N) will have no effect on this restriction, as the dining train would pass through the station without stopping.

### 1.7 Current passenger service pattern

The majority of passenger trains make a return trip between Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington and Rushcliffe Halt station. Some services continue south to the limit of GCR(N) operations close to the main line junction in Loughborough before reversing. Trains do not call at the former East Leake station in either direction.

The maximum permitted line speed through East Leake station is 25mph. At this speed, a 3 car diesel multiple unit, or 3 heritage carriages (a train of approximately 180 feet in length) would pass a fixed point in 5 seconds. Trains do not brake to stop at the former station, nor do they have to restart after a stop, which reduces noise from locomotives. We would not expect neighbouring properties to hear any noise from inside the carriages.

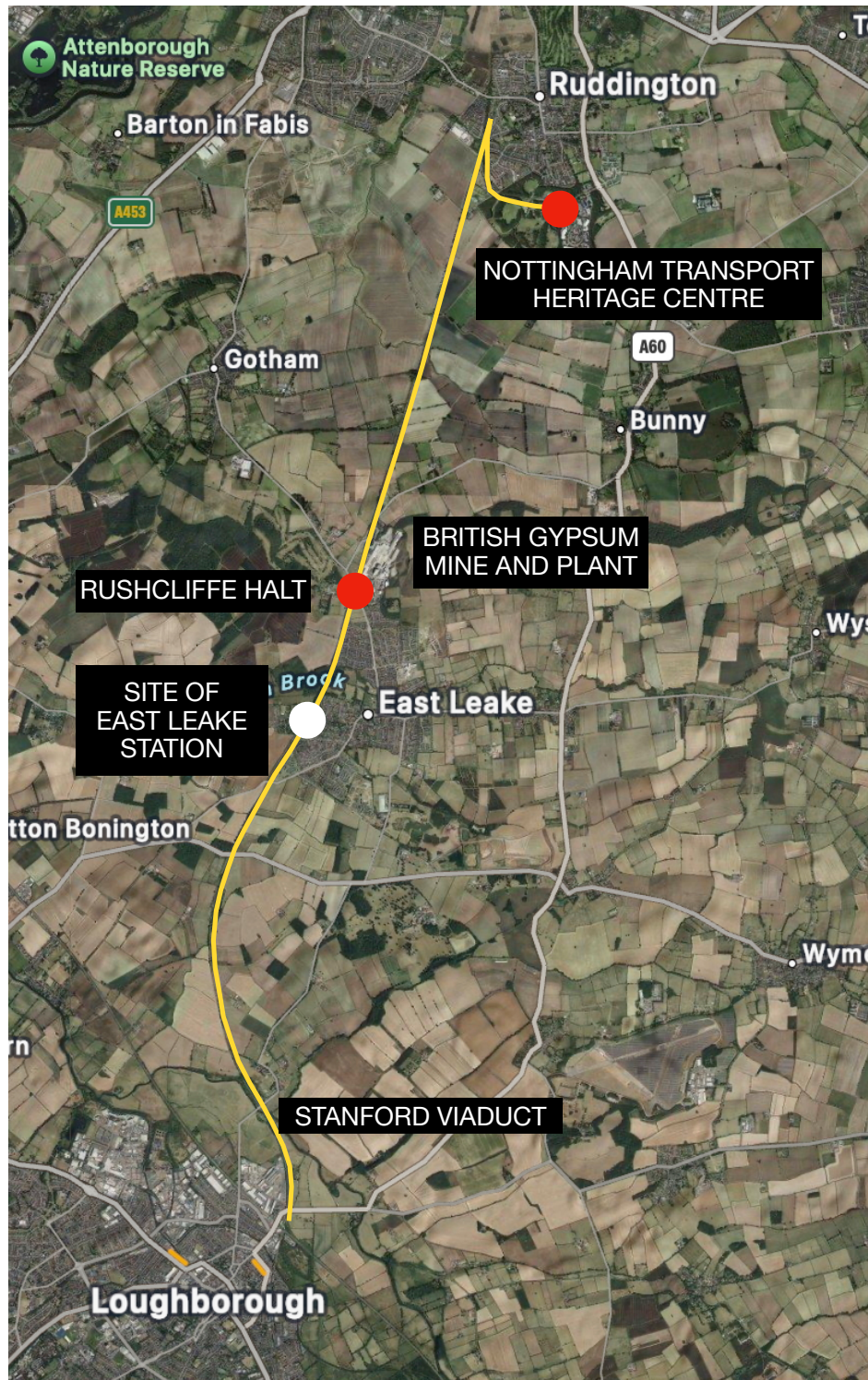
### 1.7 Driver policy

Drivers of GCR N) trains are appropriately trained and examined. They are required to adhere to a the GCR(N) rule book and driver policy. Prior to the evening trains operating the driver policy will be updated. Drivers will be reminded not to use the whistle, horn or other warning devices unless there is an emergency situation or a trespass incident.

**Figure 1**

The map shows the route of the line in yellow.

The two open stations (red circles) are at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre (near Ruddington) and Rushcliffe Halt, just north of East Leake. The white circle shows the closed station in the village of East Leake.



## REASON FOR PROPOSED CHANGES

### 2.1 Railway ownership and trading basis

GCR(N) is a wholly owned trading subsidiary of East Midlands Transport Heritage Trust, a charity which owns the line, land and other assets. GCR(N) operates on a not for profit basis and its shareholders do not receive a dividend. Money which is generated through operations is invested in growing the business, developing visitor experience, and promoting community cohesion through shared heritage.

The last published accounts show turnover to 31/1/24 (prior to trains returning) was close to £189,000 based on site activities at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre alone. The turnover has grown dramatically since then with the resumption of passenger trains. The latest year end accounts to be published in due course show turnover to 31/01/25 has increased to £488,000.

Income is vital for the maintenance and continued operation of the railway. Not only do the locomotives and carriages require regular overhauls and running repairs, but the infrastructure needs a detailed programme of inspection and maintenance. For example, repairs to a single bridge will usually cost a six figure sum and can exceed a million pounds should whole scale replacement of a bridge deck be required. Developing every possible revenue stream is essential to ensure adequate financial reserves and money to invest back in the business, to improve our visitor offer and attract new customers.

### 2.2 Wider economic benefit

Where possible, GCR(N) implements a policy of using suppliers close to its Ruddington base. For example, recent grant funded projects to construct a new toilet block and carriage shed used local labour and suppliers ensuring economic benefit is felt directly in the area around the line.

### 2.3 New dining trains

Earlier this year GCR(N) began a trial dining train operation. Using a 2 car diesel multiple unit, trains departed from the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington and travelled over the entire line to Stanford Viaduct, during which time an Indian 'street food' menu was served. The train returned immediately to the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre to comply with the current restriction. The experience was therefore concluded before 6.30pm.

The trials have continued on select Saturdays during 2025 generating valuable revenue. Tickets are sold at £40 per person and with an average of 50 seats sold, the train generates **approximately £1000** of profit for GCR(N) after suppliers are paid each time it operates (excluding drinks sales).

GCR(N) has contracted with local businesses to provide the food service and any support staff required, delivering economic value back to the immediate local area. Following this success a lunchtime dining train has been developed. In this example the train is hauled by a steam locomotive and uses conventional carriages, while fish and chips are served. This train has been developed with a third party business (Fox and Edwards events), uses a local caterer and generates **approximately £1250** in profit to GCR(N) after paying suppliers, each time it operates (again excluding drinks sales). This train has operated half a dozen times during the year, usually on a Saturday.

## 2.4 Revenue potential of a dining train

Data shared by the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire suggests a Saturday evening dining train seating 84 people at £79 per head for a five course meal generates approximately £3,000 of profit (excluding additional drink sales) every time it operates. These trains depart at 7pm and deliver an experience around 2hrs 30minutes in duration. These figures are approximate and the offer is different to the experience provided at Great Central Railway (Nottingham) but are provided to indicate the room for growth.

## 2.6 Further housing development at East Leake

A few hundred metres to the north of the former station there has been further housing development with approximately 35 properties with private gardens adjoining the railway on its eastern side.

## 2.7 Operating restrictions

The second operating restriction imposed by the 2000 Order limits the times of day during which passenger trains may operate. The purpose of the restriction was to protect the amenity of local residents. The loaded freight trains to the gypsum plant which ran (sometimes daily) between 2000 and 2020 were not affected by the curfew, though a local operating arrangement limited trains to no later than mid afternoon.

Engineering and maintenance trains, testing and commercial trains (all often longer and heavier than heritage passenger trains) are also allowed to operate at any time on the railway. As explained above, the Secretary of State has already allowed some additional evening operations on the northern part of the line to Rushcliffe Halt. The very modest extension of services now being sought would see one additional train service on a maximum of two evenings each week.

## 2.8 Passenger base for dining trains

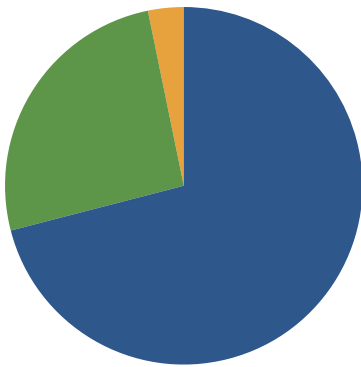
Passengers for the dining train are often making their first visit to the railway, ie the experience is the draw, rather than a deeper interest in history or heritage. They may have purchased their ticket directly, or they may have been gifted a voucher for the train. Hosting them and delivering a good impression is essential to generate repeat visits and secondary spend, driving growth both at the railway and locally.

## 2.9 Early departure off-putting / survey to establish preferred departure time

Feedback from passengers who have used the evening dining train, while enthusiastic, suggests the early departure and relatively short experience is a significant deterrent to repeat booking. In early Autumn two trains were cancelled due to a lack of passengers. We conducted a survey among GCR visitors, to ask them for a preferred departure time.

We received 62 responses, with the answers broken down as follows.

● 7pm    ● 6pm    ● 5pm



A sizeable majority of respondents said they preferred a 7pm departure from the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre, which the current curfew prohibits, clearly cutting off a market.

## 2.10 Development of new charter business also restricted

GCR(N) is also seeking to develop a private charter train business to provide the same dining experience. Businesses wishing to charter a train or smaller dining parties would travel in a luxury saloon carriage propelled by a locomotive. The early departure required to comply with the current operating restriction makes this service far less attractive, preventing this aspect of the business from growing.

### 2.11 Proposal to relax the current operating restriction

It is envisaged the additional train will operate only when there is demand and it's expected this is likely to be in months with lighter evenings. We also expect one of the twice weekly trains will run on a Saturday evening, when (a) volunteers are available, (b) people socialise later and (c) children are not at school the next day.

### 2.12 Future operations

The small variation to the TWAO would allow GCR(N) some operational flexibility to develop an offering which meets our visitors' needs and for timetables to be adjusted to suit. We are mindful of our lineside neighbours. No late night running is proposed and the twice a week limit will be strictly observed.

# CONSULTATION EVENT

### 3.1 Consultation event

An in person consultation event was held at East Leake village hall on Sunday 7th September 2025. East Leake is a sizeable village, (population 8553 in the 2021 census) with approximately 50 properties adjacent to the railway. (See 2.5 above).

As can be seen from Figure 1 (page seven), the majority of the rest of the railway runs through fields with the only other residential area of any size being at Ruddington where properties are separated from the railway by footpaths and hedgerows.

### 3.2 Promotion of consultation event

Two adverts were placed in the Loughborough Echo, one on Wednesday 27th August and another on Wednesday 3rd September 2025. A copy of the notice appears in **appendix one**. The Loughborough Echo is published by Reach PLC and copies of the notice were also placed on the newspaper website.

Notices similar to the newspaper advert were also placed on the Facebook page of the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington (3,500 followers), East Leake Parish Council (1,700 followers) and East Leake Village Hall (921 followers) (**figure 2**). Notices were also placed on the 'X' feed for GCR(N) (4000 followers) and on the website of GCR(N).

Social media allows others to repost the original notices, improving the reach of the adverts (as is the case in the example posted below).



Figure 2

An example of the Facebook posts placed before the event, being recirculated by others to their own feeds.

Similar notices were posted onto the GCRN 'X' (formerly Twitter) feed and the GCR(N) website.

### 3.3 Format of consultation event

The event took place on a 'drop in' basis between 10am and 4pm. All visitors received a welcome letter on arrival, detailing what the consultation was about and inviting comments.

### 3.4 The presentation

In the village hall a 10 minute automatic presentation was set up, detailing the background, what was being requested and the reasons for the request. At 11am and 3pm there was a formal guided presentation of around 30 minutes, with the same information. **(Figure 3).**

### 3.5 Content of presentation

The presentation covered the background to the request including a (i) map of the line, (ii) details of today's operations and (iii) proposed changes. There were moving pictures (with sound) of examples of heritage diesel multiple units, heritage diesel locomotives and steam locomotives which might operate the evening train service. These were compared to the lengthy freight trains which operated on the line until 2020. Finally, there was detailed information about how to comment and a chance to ask questions.

### 3.6 Also at the event

At all times, volunteers were available to welcome attendees and answer questions. Supporting information about the railway's other activities and projects was provided, to emphasise this a community led and volunteer dependant operation.

### 3.7 Attendance

All visitors were asked to sign in, so a record of attendance and contact details could be kept. These details appear in **appendix two**. In total 28 people attended the event representing 20 households, the vast majority from around East Leake. One household from Ruddington attended.



**Figure 3**

A photograph taken during the guided presentation of the proposals. The presentation was also available all day for attendees who wished to drop in but not stay for the guided presentation.

### 3.8 Comments received at the consultation event

A total of five comments were received on provided cards during the event. These have been transcribed and are in **appendix three**. On the attendance list in appendix two, these are denoted with a blue number after the name.

### 3.9 Dedicated email address for responses

Prior to the event a dedicated email address was set up to receive comments. An auto reply thanked people commenting, reminding them of the proposed changes.

### 3.10 Extension of email response deadline

It had originally been intended to monitor the email inbox for two weeks (until Sunday 21st September). Following comments received at the consultation, this was extended until Sunday 12th October to ensure there was plenty of time for responses to be received. The emails received have been collated in **appendix four**. On the attendance list in appendix two, these are denoted with a pink number after the name.

### 3.11 Post event promotion of consultation

After the event, a reminder notice was placed on the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) website inviting comments with the deadline for responses.

### 3.12 Responses from Rope Walk

8 households from Rope Walk attended the consultation event. 3 commented via email, 5 did not comment. 1 comment was later received via email from a Rope Walk household, who did not attend the event.

### 3.13 Geographic spread of comments

The response (both in person and via email) has been mapped. The map is in **appendix five**. Blue circles denote comments received on the day in person. Pink circles denote comments received after the event via email. Yellow circles indicate households who attended but did not comment.

A detailed inset shows Rope Walk and those who attended and the comments received. The map shows comments were received from across the village, some from well beyond the railway. Some of those responding via email didn't leave a postal address, so could not be mapped.

### 3.14 Summary of comments

12 comments were received via email, 5 on cards in the room, making a total of 17 comments.

10 supported the proposals, 4 suggested alternative curfew arrangements or other TWAO amendments and 3 objected.

1 of the supportive comments comes from the chair of the charity which owns the trackbed and railway (and who is also an East Leake resident). This is email 13.

1 of the comments comes from a railway volunteer and resident of Rope Walk. This is email 9.

### 3.15 Additional comments from elected officials

Following the consultation event, comments were solicited and received from the MP for Rushcliffe James Naish and Councillor Andy Brown, Mayor of Rushcliffe and Gotham ward councillor. Both are supportive of the proposals and their responses are attached in **appendix six**.

## POST CONSULTATION

### 4.1 Starting point

The majority of respondents supported the proposals for an extension of the curfew to 10pm. An elected councillor also endorsed the proposals. Of the 8 households from Rope Walk (adjacent to the railway) who attended the consultation event, 5 did not comment. Only 3 objections were received from East Leake village, which has a population of 8,500.

### 4.2 Endorsement of proposals from local MP

The member of parliament for Rushcliffe is James Naish. East Leake, Ruddington and the vast majority of the GCR(N) route is in the constituency. He endorses the proposals (**appendix six**).

### 4.3 Support from business providing catering and event support

GCR(N) has received a letter of support from a business partner who provides catering and support for events, detailing their intentions to grow the relationship and their desire to see evening trains developed for economic growth (**appendix seven**).

### 4.4 Development of timetables for the evening train

Since the consultation event, more work has been done to develop the timetables for the evening train. Four timetable scenarios are presented in **appendix eight**. They offer different departure times from Ruddington and service patterns. The latest a train passes through the site of East Leake station is Option D, at 9pm. We believe this considers the needs of the majority of local residents while allowing for a meaningful evening dining train experience to operate.

While timetables indicate trains will be through East Leake station well before 10pm, the overall 10pm limit will allow trains to return to Ruddington in good time and will allow some operational flexibility. For example, different seasons will dictate different service patterns. On darker evenings the train is less likely to make the scenic pause on the viaduct. Likewise, there may be occasions where passengers arrive late or a problem develops with the locomotive, requiring a replacement, or a medical emergency on board the train requires a lengthy stop. With the 10pm curfew there is some room to make sensible adjustments to the timetable on the day, rather than cancel a train altogether.

### 4.5 Correspondence with consultation respondents

GCR(N) has written to all respondents to advise them of the consultation results and the next stages of the formal request to the Secretary of State.

END OF MAIN REPORT.

APPENDICES 1-8 FOLLOW.



**Great Central Railway  
(Nottingham) Ltd.**

## **THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY (EAST LEAKE BRANCH, ETC.) ORDER 2000**

### **CONSULTATION EVENT SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**

Great Central Railway (Nottingham) Limited cordially invites you to a public consultation event on Sunday 7 September 2025 between 10am and 4pm, with 30 minute presentations at 11am and 3pm.

Come along to find out about our proposals to operate a limited number of evening dining trains along the line. Starting at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre in Ruddington, they would run south through Rushcliffe Halt and across Stanford Viaduct, before returning north.

Prior to introducing this service, we will be writing to the Secretary of State for Transport to formally request her consent to the operation of a single train, on no more than two evenings a week, finishing no later than 10pm. We would welcome your questions and feedback before we make this request.

The event will also include an exhibition about the history of the line, as well as information about our current operations and ongoing work to revive the railway. Meet volunteers, find out about joining the team and learn about our plans for Rushcliffe Halt station and progress towards reconnecting with the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire.

**East Leake Village Hall, 45 Main Street,  
East Leake, Loughborough, LE12 6PF**

**Email: [eastleake@gcrailway.co.uk](mailto:eastleake@gcrailway.co.uk)**

## APPENDIX TWO

Visitors to consultation event, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2025

| Name and Address | Comment |
|------------------|---------|
|------------------|---------|

|                                                     |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|
| [REDACTED] Main Street, East Leake, LE12 6PG        | C1 |
| [REDACTED] Bateman Road, East Leake, LE12 6NL       | C2 |
| [REDACTED] Thompson Close, East Leake, LE12 6HP     | C3 |
| [REDACTED] Evans Road, East Leake, LE12 6AS         |    |
| [REDACTED] Elms Gardens, Ruddington, NG11 6DZ       |    |
| [REDACTED] Woodpecker Close, East Leake, LE12 6YN   | C4 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, East Leake, LE12 6NR           | E9 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, East Leake, LE12 6NR           |    |
| [REDACTED] Bunny Lane, LE12 6JE                     | E5 |
| [REDACTED] Brookfields Way, East Leake, LE12 6HD    | E7 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, East Leake, LE12 6NR           |    |
| [REDACTED] Angrave Road, East Leake, LE12 6JA       | E4 |
| [REDACTED] Thistlebank, East Leake, LE12 6RS        |    |
| [REDACTED] Winchester Close, East Leake, LE12 6LP   | E1 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, LE12 6NR                       | E3 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, LE12 6NR                       |    |
| [REDACTED] Melbourne Road, West Bridgeford, NG2 5BG |    |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, LN12 6NR                       | E2 |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, LE12 6NR                       |    |
| [REDACTED] Ropewalk, LE12 6NR                       |    |

Total attendees: 28

## APPENDIX THREE

**EAST LEAKE TWAO CONSULTATION EVENT, 7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025****Comments with names, left in person on cards at the consultation event:**

*(Blue Numbers relate to their position on the consultation map)*

**C1**

- I think the Great Central Railway brings a lot of pleasure to so many and more trains that run the more pleasure and joy is given to young and old.

[REDACTED]

Resident of Main Street, East Leake

**C2**

- Welcome the idea of expanding the rail services.

[REDACTED]

Resident of Bateman Road, East Leake

**C3**

- The evening dining sounds like a really nice offering for people and as an East Leake resident I do not have any concerns. We already live under the East Midlands Airport approach and I would be sorry if a Boeing 747 drowned out the approach of a heritage train passing by. I love it.

[REDACTED]

Resident of Thompson Close, East Leake

**C4**

- A train passing for 2 minutes, twice on an evening and maximum two times per week seems reasonable. More noise and disruption from motorbikes in the village.

[REDACTED]

Resident of Woodpecker Close, East Leake

**Unattributed comments, left in person on cards at the consultation event:**

[REDACTED]

Believed to be resident of  
Woodpecker Close, East Leake

**C5**

- Excellent idea, very supportive of this proposition. As a family we have lived near the heritage railway and enjoyed seeing and hearing the trains.

APPENDIX FOUR

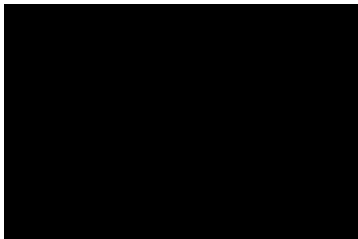
**Email responses received after the consultation event.**

*(The inbox was monitored between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025).*

*(Pink Numbers relate to their position on the consultation map)*

**E1**

**EMAIL ONE: Received 7<sup>th</sup> September 8:26pm**



We visited your event at East Leake village hall today and were very impressed with the presentation and displays.

We fully support the wish to run occasional dining trains along the existing railway and would certainly travel on them.

The current restriction of being unable to run heritage passenger trains beyond 6pm would make the proposal very difficult to be attractive to the public.

It would seem that the current legal restrictions need to be changed, and quickly, to allow this idea to become a successful reality.

Extending the running hours beyond 6pm would give local people the opportunity to enjoy a meal and a unique view of their area, which we are sure could become very popular.

It would also offer the Railway the flexibility to provide afternoon teas as well as evening meals in an environment many heritage railways have found to be well supported providing a welcome extra income stream.

The enthusiasm demonstrated by the volunteers today and the visible work already done along the railway deserves support in obtaining this legal change.

We hope this proposal gains the support to enable success.



APPENDIX FOUR CONTINUED

E2

**EMAIL TWO: Received 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 1.55pm**

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern

Thank you to all who presented the case for running dining trains at the Village Hall on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September. Sorry I can't remember all your names. The proposal was outlined very well and considerations had been taken into account regarding safety, wild life preservation, the well being of local residents and the ongoing struggle to attract funds.

As a resident of East Leake and a former resident of Ruddington I have supported the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) for many years and do love to see the trains running through our village.

The proposal for dining trains is a sound one and, apart from one point, I support the operation except for the lateness of the train returning to Ruddington, currently proposed for completion by 10pm. Not only is this time past MY bedtime but past that of children within our community.

I would support an earlier completion time of 9pm which would also be better for staff and passengers. It has recently been reported that the majority of evening meals taken in the UK is now earlier than in the past (optimum time being 5.30-7.00).

Certainly I know of many who don't like eating late.

I hope that you will adopt this time change and wish you all the very best in getting this venture up and running.

Thank you for your time and commitment to everything you do for the Great Central Railway (Nottingham).

APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

E3

**EMAIL THREE: Received 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 10.17am**

[REDACTED]

Sir / Madam,

Firstly let me say that we have been residents of the Ropewalk, East Leake for the last 30 years and the rear of our property is around 12 metres from the railway line; the two main bedrooms are to the rear of the property. Having said that, please let me say that we have no objection whatsoever to the pleasure trips that currently run along the line, and in fact we enjoy seeing them.

We understand that there is currently an order in place that prevents pleasure trains from running after 6pm every day. We believe that this was put in place partly to protect residents from any unnecessary disturbance during the late evening.

This new proposal to run trains as late as 10pm will, in our opinion, be an unnecessary disturbance to us. However, if your proposal were to avoid running pleasure trains past the rear of the Ropewalk no later than 8:30pm, then we would see no objections to your plans.

Regards

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

E4

EMAIL FOUR: Received 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 11.09am

[REDACTED]

I am a resident of East Leake and attended your public consultation on the proposal to run passenger trains later into the day along the line through the village.

I fully support the up coming application to extend the running times as outlined.

I would also welcome a slightly wider application to run special trains like moon lit, mid night, dawn, haloween or even New Years Eve!

I have tenants in two properties very close to the line and the current tenants have indicated that they all love the trains and have no objection to the modest increases proposed. ( 76 & 78 Thistlebank, East Leake)

Best wishes with your plans

[REDACTED]

## APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

E5

EMAIL FIVE: Received 9<sup>th</sup> September 11:16am

Good afternoon, Tony,

Thank you for your time on Sunday. As requested here is an overview of all my concerns.

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the impact of the steam train operations on my wellbeing and the enjoyment of my property, as raised during the consultation meeting held at the village hall on 7/9/25. Below, I outline the specific issues caused by the railway's operations, their effects on my household, and then some additional feedback from the consultation. I respectfully request that these concerns accompany your submission to the Secretary of State of Transport and are addressed in your operational and environmental policies.

**Impact on Wellbeing and Property Use**

The operation of the steam train has significantly affected my physical and mental health, as well as my ability to enjoy my property. The following issues have been particularly disruptive:

**1. Air Pollution from Soot and Smoke:**

The steam train emits significant quantities of soot and acrid smoke, which are drawn into my garden due to airflow dynamics over the embankment, creating a persistent and unpleasant environment. This pollution restricts outdoor activities, including hanging laundry, allowing my pets to roam safely, and enjoying my garden. On warm days, I am forced to keep all doors and windows closed, causing discomfort. Failure to do so results in soot infiltrating my home, requiring additional cleaning.

**2. Health Impacts:**

Inhaling the soot and smoke causes persistent respiratory irritation, as experienced on the first day of resumed operations, posing a direct risk to my health.

**3. Disruption to Daily Life:**

The train's operations, particularly on weekends, disrupt my ability to relax and enjoy my home, a time when I should be free from work-related stress. In addition, the train schedules sometimes differ from those published on your website, which creates further unease and anxiety.

**4. Noise Concerns:**

The noise from train operations is a significant disturbance, and the prospect of evening runs, whether diesel or steam, heightens my concern. Such operations, particularly in summer, would further limit my ability to enjoy my garden, exacerbating stress and anxiety.

As a result of these issues, my husband and I are unable to use our property as we normally would. The impact is substantial and, based on statements made at the consultation, is likely to worsen with increased frequency of operations during weekends, evenings, and summer holiday periods.

## APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED) EMAIL FIVE CONTINUED

**Environmental and Operational Responsibilities**

I believe that any residents who live near the line have a right to enjoy their homes without unwarranted noise and pollution, particularly as the trains you run do not serve an essential public function. Your organisation has an environmental responsibility to mitigate these impacts, yet there appear to be significant gaps in your current approach. The consultation revealed plans to expand the railway's business operations, which raises further concerns about the adequacy of your environmental and operational policies.

Moreover, the reliance on volunteers to operate the railway, while commendable, raises questions about accountability and adherence to current legislation. If expansion is planned, it is critical that professional oversight and robust policies are implemented to ensure compliance with environmental and operational standards.

**Feedback on the Consultation Process**

The consultation meeting highlighted several concerning factors:

**1. Lack of Visual Aids:**

The absence of a map illustrating the housing estates and roads adjacent to the railway line hindered a comprehensive understanding of the affected areas.

**2. Unprepared Representatives:**

Some representatives appeared unprepared, with one individual, yourself, Tony, primarily responding to questions while others seemed disengaged, diminishing the consultation's effectiveness.

**3. Lack of Clear Policies:**

The lack of a clear, accessible environmental policy and the absence of a formal driver policy (covering operations, conduct, roles, and responsibilities) were concerning, though your commitment to address the latter with Andy was a positive step.

**4. Unbalanced Representation:**

The attendee demographic to the consultation was predominantly older, with limited representation from younger families or residents living adjacent to the railway. This imbalance raises concerns about the relevance of the attendee's input, and invitations should have been targeted to those in nearby housing estates.

**5. Promotion and Transparency Issues:**

The claim that the consultation was promoted to its fullest via social media was inaccurate, as the event was only posted to a parish councillors' group (1.7k followers) and not the main East Leake Community page (11k followers), raising concerns about transparency. The assertion that leaflet drops were too costly was contradicted by the abundance of glossy leaflets at the event, suggesting selective resource allocation.

**Conclusion and Request for Action**

The operation of the steam train is having a significant and detrimental impact on my wellbeing and my ability to enjoy my property. I urge you to take these concerns seriously and implement measures to mitigate the noise, pollution, and disruption caused by the railway. This includes developing and publicising clear environmental and operational policies, improving transparency in community engagement, and

**APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED) EMAIL FIVE (CONTINUED)**

ensuring that any expansion plans prioritise the wellbeing of residents along the railway route.

I respectfully request that this letter be included with your submission to the Secretary of State and that you provide a written response outlining the steps you will take to address these concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

E6

**EMAIL SIX: Received 14<sup>th</sup> September at 8.34am**

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam

I trust all is well with you.

Regarding the proposal of a limited expansion of running dining trains on selected evenings, personally I feel this is a good idea as it has not only brings visitors to the area who can enjoy the scenery that the Great Central Railway has to offer, there is the potential that other local business can benefit by offering other services such as accommodation which in turn could help local employment and economy.

The GCR is not just a tourist attraction but also a community asset along with being part of local history which has the potential of providing another transport link for locals or other visitors to the area. The station of East Leake obviously provided a public service until closure resulting in the loss of not only the train service but also jobs.

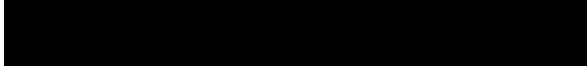
I do hope you take this proposal favourably in order for the GCR and local area to flourish without spoiling the beauty and charm that exists for all to enjoy

Blessed be

[REDACTED]

## APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

E7

**EMAIL SEVEN: Received 17<sup>th</sup> September at 8.30am****Subject: Formal Objection – Proposed Evening Dining Service, Rushcliffe Heritage Railway**

Dear Heritage Railway and Secretary of State,

I am writing to register my formal objection to the proposed evening dining service to be operated by Rushcliffe Heritage Railway.

**1. Residential Amenity and Noise Impact**

The proposal to run dining trains twice weekly until 10pm would have a significant negative effect on residents living adjacent to the railway line. My own property backs directly onto the line, with my bedroom window facing the track. I go to bed around 9pm, and the proposed services will inevitably disturb my wellbeing and rest. I am sure the same will apply to numerous families with young children or shift workers living on estates backing onto the railway. There seems to have been little thought to the timings of this new service and how that might impact those living against the line.

**2. Inadequate Community Consultation**

The level of public consultation to date has been wholly inadequate. To my knowledge, no localised flyer drop or direct engagement has been carried out with those who live immediately along the railway line and would be most affected. This falls short of the expectation for meaningful community consultation in planning matters, where those most directly impacted should be fully informed and given the opportunity to contribute their views. The public consultation at the village hall, struck tones of a sales pitch and attended mainly by supporters who do not live directly along the railway line. When asked about a flyer drop they advised this would be too costly, even though their stalls were decorated with glossy flyers promoting their current services.

**3. Ecological and Environmental Impact**

We have lived in our current address for the last 26 years and can attest and evidence that the railway corridor supports a rich and diverse ecological habitat which we very much enjoy. In and around my garden and the adjoining line, there are bats, badgers, foxes, owls, and muntjac deer. Many of these species are nocturnal and highly sensitive to light and noise disturbance.

**APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED) EMAIL SEVEN (CONTINUED)**

- Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence to disturb them in their roosts or habitats.
- Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.
- Disturbance to protected species could put the operators in breach of these laws.

The introduction of twice-weekly late evening train services, with associated light, noise, and human activity, risks long-term damage to this harmonious and ecologically sensitive area.

**4. Policy Compliance and Safeguards**

Before any such operations are approved, there should be clear and transparent evidence of:

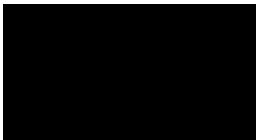
- A Noise Impact Assessment, specifically considering residential properties adjacent to the line.
- An Ecological Impact Assessment, including surveys for bats and other protected species.
  - During the consultation I asked if their ecology policy was shared or published on their website, the representatives were unsure.
- A Driver Policy to ensure competency standards and respectful consideration for surrounding properties and residents is adhered to.
- A complete community engagement process, ensuring those most affected are all contacted and have a genuine opportunity to participate.

Without these safeguards, I do not believe the proposal is compliant with planning policy, or with statutory protections for wildlife.

**Conclusion**

While I recognise the cultural and heritage value of the railway, the proposed evening dining events would cause unacceptable harm to both the amenity of local residents and the integrity of the surrounding natural environment. I therefore strongly object to the proposal in its current form.

Yours sincerely,



APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

(E8 - no postal address given)

EMAIL EIGHT: Received 9th October at 10:49pm



Hi

Heritage Trains

My opinion - we have a perfectly good train line from Ruddington to Loughborough (and beyond) which should be used more than it is. No problem with running the occasional evening dining trains, imho.

I'm surprised it hasn't been used much more over the summer, given the lovely weather we have had. Steam trains ? Excursions ?

Only possible negatives of dining trains:

1. Stopping for the dinner period alongside existing properties
2. Safety risk due to trespassing, especially in darkness. Current "fencing" is pretty poor.

Gypsum Freight Trains

Why have these stopped running from Tees Dock - maybe the A60 road bridge issue ?

Hopefully something could be done to reduce the 100s of lorry journeys choking our roads.

You may know that it is intended to start mining gypsum on the Ratcliffe Power Station site - which is rail served. Is this an opportunity to re-start gypsum trains to East Leake ?

Hopefully these comments are useful.



APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

(E9)

**EMAIL NINE: Received 10th October at 11:09pm**



To whom this may concern,

Following on from the Consultation Event of 7th September 2025 in East Leake Village Hall, please note my comments as follows:

Currently all trains running south of Bridge 307 (north of Rushcliffe Halt) through to Bridge 328 (nr Loughborough), except those carrying goods, are restricted to run between 09:00 and 18:00 only; a benefit to those living next to the railway is that there is presently privacy from the interest and view of passengers outside of these hours.

And whilst goods trains were running, local arrangements ensured the minimum of disturbance by rarely running before 07:30 or after mid-afternoon.

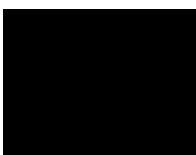
I am keen to see the railway thrive, and support the expansion of the railway's activities, but also want to ensure that the rights currently enjoyed are respected.

For the proposed 2 dining trains a week, I would like a revised Works Order to ensure that:

- The trains are defined to be dining only.
- There will be no stopping, except in emergency, anywhere between the south of East Leake station and Bridge 308 (south of Rushcliffe Halt).
- Steps are taken to ensure that rowdiness will not occur.
- All such operations are publicised in advance.

Finally, whilst outside the scope of the consultation, there exists the likelihood of people (trespassers) not being aware that trains would be regularly running later. I would suggest that if the proposal goes ahead then additional publicity is made to ensure maximum awareness of the change of condition.

(I live next to the line, and also volunteer for the railway along this section of line.)



APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

(E10)

EMAIL TEN: Received 11th October at 3:17pm

[REDACTED]

Hi,

I am writing to object to plans to allow evening dining trains to run on the Great Central Railway (Nottingham).

As a mother of young children living beside the train line in East Leake I am concerned about the late night noise the evening dining trains would create. This would disturb my children's sleep greatly and disturb the evening peace and quiet in the area.

In addition, I think the introduction of late services on the line would have a negative impact on the value of any property along the line as this would discourage anyone with young children buying in the area or near the line, for the reasons mentioned above.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of the decision.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

A blank email was received from [REDACTED]

(E11)

Saturday 11th October at 3:20pm

APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

(E12)

**EMAIL TWELVE: Received 12th October at 2:57pm**

[REDACTED]

I would like to comment on the proposal of running trains up to 10pm on the line than runs along the back of our house.

I think that the current 6pm curfew is adequate and would NOT like to see trains running up to 10pm as I feel this is too late for those with young families. I would not be opposed to a 7pm curfew, but 10pm we are opposed to.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX FOUR (CONTINUED)

(This respondent is referred to in 3.15. He is the chair of the charitable trust which owns the railway line and also a resident of East Leake)

(E13)

EMAIL THIRTEEN: Received 12th October at 6:57pm

[REDACTED]

I am writing in support of the application to amend the Transport & Works Act Order for East Leake, in extending the permitted running times after 6pm to accommodate additional evening dining trains and related workings.

I support the application for the following reasons:

1. It will enhance the visitor attraction and heritage appeal of the railway by running selected dining trains on no more than two evenings per week after 6pm.
2. This will enhance the viability of the heritage railway and will be essential for services following reunification with the GCR railway at Loughborough.
3. This will contribute to local economic growth and employment.
4. It will have minimal environmental impact on neighbours and communities along the line. For comparison, houses adjacent to the old station in East Leake are overflowed by aircraft on the flightpath to land at east Midlands Airport at headways of every 2 minutes 24 hours per day. The extra trains will not be noticed.

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX FIVE



**APPENDIX SIX**

**RECEIVED 15th SEPTEMBER**

**Cllr Andy Brown, Rushcliffe Borough Council**

Dear Tom

I hope you are well. Yes, you have my full support for an evening rail dining service. GCR North is an asset to the local tourism industry. I look forward to the day when

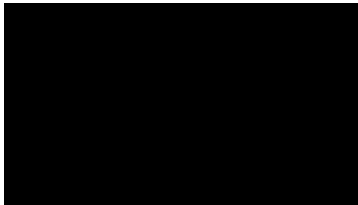
GCR North and South are one line again, what an evening excursion that would make. Please let me know if there is anything more I could do to help.

I will certainly book for your first evening meal train.

Kind regards

Andy

Member for Leake & Ruddington Division



**RECEIVED 13th OCTOBER**

**James Naish MP, Rushcliffe**

*Dear Andy,*

*Thank you for getting in touch about the plans for an evening dining train running from the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre through Rushcliffe Halt Station and across Stanford Viaduct to Loughborough, before returning north.*

*I am very happy to offer my support for this proposal. The initiative has potential to bring economic and cultural benefits to our area, and will support local suppliers, attract visitors and further strengthen the important volunteer-led heritage work carried out by your organisation. It also represents a sensible and proportionate extension to your current operations, maintaining a considerate approach to local communities while helping to sustain and grow a valued local attraction.*

*I am, therefore, pleased to endorse Great Central Railway Nottingham's request for the Secretary of State for Transport to vary its Transport and Works Act Order to permit the proposed evening dining service.*

*Thank you once again for your continued efforts to preserve and promote our region's transport heritage. I look forward to seeing the next stages of this exciting development.*

*Kind regards,*

*James*

APPENDIX SEVEN

Fox & Edwards Events

Dear Secretary of State,

**Letter of Support for Great Central Railway (Nottingham) to Expand their Evening Services**

We are an event management company, supporting 18 heritage railways across the UK, with events and support services. In 2025, we will have welcomed 120,000 visitors nationally and employ 30 members of staff, particularly in the East Midlands where we are based.

We're delighted to partner with Great Central Railway (Nottingham) to promote and deliver journeys with catering and other themed events.

In 2026, our programme at GCR is likely to include over 40 operating days and attract several thousand visitors.

There are additional, large-scale events that we would like to be able to deliver at GCRN, but to achieve a level that makes them viable operations into the evening are required. While these involve limited numbers of train movements past 18:00, the whole day's operation is supported by revenue from these evening services.

Other heritage railways in the East Midlands who we work with operate without these restrictions. Growth on this railway for us is somewhat dependent on its competitiveness and flexibility compared to other lines.

The impact of our bookings on GCRN has already meant investment into additional hired rolling stock, the return of steam locomotive-pulled services and enhanced volunteer facilities.

We fully support the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) intentions to develop an evening dining train programme and look forward to working with them in future. For both parties it will deliver real economic growth for the local and wider economy.

Yours

Olly Edwards

--

**Director**

## APPENDIX EIGHT

## GCR (N) Evening trains timetable: OPTIONS

These trains will be operated by a diesel multiple unit, or by a locomotive propelling carriages or by two locomotives at each end of a set of carriages.

|                          | OPTION<br>A  | OPTION<br>B  |              | OPTION<br>C  |              | OPTION<br>D  |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Ruddington depart</b> | <b>19:00</b> | <b>19:00</b> |              | <b>19:00</b> |              | <b>19:30</b> |
| 50 Steps depart          | 19:10        | 19:10        | 20:45        | 19:10        |              | 19:40        |
| Rushcliffe Halt pass     | 19:20        | 19:20        | 20:55        | 19:20        |              | 19:50        |
| East Leake pass          | 19:23        | 19:23        |              | 19:23        |              | 19:53        |
| MML junction arrive      | 19:38        | 19:38        |              | 19:38        |              | 20:08        |
| MML junction depart      | 19:45        | 19:45        |              | 19:45        |              | 20:15        |
| Stanford viaduct arrive  | 19:48        | 19:48        |              | 19:48        | 20:35        | 20:18        |
| Stanford viaduct depart  | 20:18        | 20:18        |              | 20:18        | 20:45        | 20:48        |
| <b>East Leake pass</b>   | <b>20:30</b> | <b>20:30</b> |              |              | <b>20:57</b> | <b>21:00</b> |
| Rushcliffe Halt pass     | 20:33        | 20:33        | 21:05        |              | 21:00        | 21:03        |
| 50 steps arrive          | 20:43        | 20:43        | 21:15        |              | 21:10        | 21:13        |
| <b>Ruddington arrive</b> | <b>20:53</b> |              | <b>21:25</b> |              | <b>21:20</b> | <b>21:23</b> |

## Notes:

- All options travel the entire length of the line with a 30 minute pause at Stanford Viaduct.
- Option B extends the evening with an additional run between Rushcliffe Halt and 50 steps.
- Option C extends the evening. The train departs from Ruddington, to the MML junction and then returns to the viaduct. Having departed the viaduct at 20:18 it runs north to Barnstone Tunnel and then returns to the viaduct. It leaves the viaduct again at 20:45 for a return to Ruddington.
- Option D is a 19.30 departure with viaduct pause.

Times in red show the last time a train would pass the former East Leake station in each option.