

**PROPOSED CHILTERN RAILWAYS (BICESTER TO OXFORD IMPROVEMENTS)  
ORDER**

**CHILTERN RAILWAYS' REBUTTAL PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

**IN RELATION TO**

**THE REPRESENTATION AND EVIDENCE OF**

**CYCLISTS TOURING CLUB**

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This rebuttal proof of evidence has been prepared on behalf of Chiltern Railway Company Limited (Chiltern Railways) to respond to particular aspects of the representation and evidence of Cyclists Touring Club
- 1.2 The Cyclists Touring Club has raised points in its representation letter which Chiltern Railways has previously addressed through correspondence and in the proofs of evidence prepared by their witnesses, which were submitted to the Inspector and to certain objectors on 1 October 2010.
- 1.3 It is not intended that this rebuttal proof should repeat material that the witnesses for Chiltern Railways have already covered in their evidence. Cross-references to relevant paragraphs of those witnesses' proofs of evidence are given below, where appropriate.
- 1.4 It is intended that this rebuttal proof should clarify the Chiltern Railways responses to those points raised in the evidence of the Cyclists Touring Club. In this respect, for cross-examination purposes, the name of the Chiltern Railways witness who is responsible for each aspect of this rebuttal proof is given at the beginning of each section below.

**2 Defined Terms**

- 2.1 The following defined terms are referred to throughout this rebuttal proof:

*“the Correspondence”* means correspondence in the form of letters and emails exchanged between Chiltern Railways and the Cyclists Touring Club dated 17 February 2010 and 18 May 2010, attached as Appendix A to this rebuttal proof;

<i>“the Representor”</i>	means the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC);
<i>“the Representor’s evidence”</i>	means the letter from Phillip Ashbourn of the Cyclists Touring Club dated 17 February 2010;
<i>“the Order application”</i>	means the application for the proposed Order submitted on 6 January 2010 and the Proposed Modification dated 9 September 2010; and
<i>“the proposed Order”</i>	means the proposed Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order.

### **3 Chiltern Railways Rebuttal of the Objector’s Evidence**

#### *Context*

- 3.1 Phillip Ashbourn has presented the evidence on behalf of the Cyclists Touring Club.

#### *Recognition of Cyclists Rights to use Bridleways, Ian Gilder*

- 3.2 The Representor expresses concern that the Rights of Way Report failed to recognise that cyclists have a legal right to cycle on public bridleways.
- 3.3 Although the Public Rights of Way Report [**CD/1.11**] does not make explicit mention of the right of cyclists to use public bridleways this was given due consideration in the design of the Order Scheme and in the consideration of alternatives for the stopping up of level crossing and the proposed diversions.

#### *Signage, Ian Gilder*

- 3.4 The Cyclists Touring Club (CTC) objects to the use of ‘cycle dismount’ signs and proposes alternative signage in accordance with departmental standards.
- 3.5 Ian Gilder responds to this point in paragraph 11.82 of his proof of evidence [**CRCL/P/12/A**] confirming that departmental standards in signage will be met.

#### *Provision of Wheeling Ramps on Footbridges with Steps, Stephen Barker*

- 3.6 The Representor seeks confirmation that wheeling ramps can be provided on footbridges with steps.
- 3.7 Chiltern Railways will not be providing wheeling ramps on stepped footbridges, as these can create water traps and cause maintenance problems. However, all the bridleway bridges will have ramped access, as will the footbridge at Tubbs Lane. The other footbridges are at locations where the level of use is very low and the use of wheelchairs (and thus cycles) is impractical due to impediments along the access route. This is in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) legislation.

*Suitability of a Subway for Works No 8 (New Railway Chord) and Works No. 9 (Tubbs Lane), Stephen Barker*

- 3.8 The Representor suggests that a subway would be more suitable than the proposed footbridge over the new chord to the London to Birmingham lines proposed in Work No. 8 and Work No. 9 at Tubbs Lane. The Representor considers that the footbridge at Tubbs Lane will create a substantial intrusion to the privacy of neighbouring properties and that a subway would reduce the distance that would need to be travelled to cross the railway line. The Representor suggests that if the subway option were to be progressed at Tubbs Lane, flooding could be avoided by leading water alongside the branch of the path heading south so that it can discharge into the adjacent stream or local drainage network.
- 3.9 A subway would not be appropriate as a means of crossing the proposed connecting line to the London to Birmingham railway line. The level of the footway within the subway would be beneath that of the local water table and the subway would thus require pumped drainage, which represents significant on-going maintenance cost compared to a bridge. Subways present a perceived risk to personal security and design guidance issued by the Highways Agency advises against their use in 'urban and peri-urban areas' for this reason.
- 3.10 Chiltern Railways examined in some detail the possibility of providing a subway at Tubbs Lane. However, it would suffer from problems of flooding and perceived security. The latter is particularly important at Tubbs Lane due to the number of children and young family groups using the crossing. In addition, the constricted space on the Launton Road side would result in an overly-steep access ramp that would be narrow and curved (resulting in restricted forward visibility). Maintenance access to the adjacent electricity substation would be difficult to accommodate, additional land that is currently public open space would be required and an inaccessible area of land would be created in the "V" between the paths and the nearest houses on the estate side.

*A New Crossing at Launton Road, Ian Gilder*

- 3.11 The Representor is promoting an additional crossing point from the land north of Gavray Drive to Launton Road.
- 3.12 Ian Gilder responds to this point in paragraph 11.77 of his proof of evidence [CRCL/P/12/A] confirming that Chiltern Railways is not seeking powers for an additional bridge crossing from the land to the north of Gavray Drive to Launton Road as adequate provision is made at the Tubbs Lane crossing.

*London Road Level Crossing, Stephen Barker*

- 3.13 The Representor considers that the skew crossing at London Road increases the risk of cyclists falling off as tyres could be deflected sideways by vertical edges. In addition, the Representor states that the crossing width and skew rails could present problems for pedestrians. The Representor points out that the nearby A41 bridge provides a crossing point for non-local traffic which presents the opportunity to redesign the London Road crossing and road alignment to remove the option of

running through lights and control traffic speeds entering Bicester. Furthermore, the Representor suggests that Chiltern Railways should work with Oxford County Council to develop direct road links to the A41. The Representor states that the extension of Station Approach could also be connected to the A41, which would create better conditions for non motorised traffic and pedestrians.

- 3.14 The rebuilt crossing surface at London Road will be designed to comply with latest standards. There is inadequate space to realign the road in order provide a perpendicular crossing, but Chiltern Railways has made provision for the widening of the footways to improve the situation for pedestrians.
- 3.15 Speed limits and traffic flow along London Road are a matter for the highways authority and are outside Chiltern Railways' control. London Road is the main vehicle route from the south into the town centre, but some traffic is likely to divert via the A41, as part of the ring road.
- 3.16 The Order Scheme will deliver a pedestrian and cycling link from the rebuilt Bicester Town station to Bicester Village, and hence the A41 via Pingle Drive. However, general policy in the area is to avoid creating a 'rat-run' for motorists between London Road and Pingle Drive due to congestion on the latter.

*Mansmoor Lane/Holts Farm/BBONT Crossing, Ian Gilder*

- 3.17 The Representor is seeking clarity on the alignment of the proposed bridleway alignment to the south of the new Holts Farm bridge and the extent of bridleway to be stopped up. The Representor encourages Chiltern Railways to improve the grassed bridleway on both sides of the railway as it is prone to severe flooding.
- 3.18 As set out in paragraph 11.79 of Ian Gilder's evidence [CRCL/P/12/A], south of the railway the proposed diversion links back onto the public rights of way network on Mansmoor Road and to the north of the railway it follows the boundary of the Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSI. The diversion and length of bridleway to be stopped up is shown on the revised illustrative public rights of way plans [CD/1.21.1]. Since the submission of Ian Gilder's proof, it has been proposed that a further part of the bridleway diversion will be a hard surfaced track. The Review of the Hydrological Impacts of Proposals for Hardened Tracks on and around the Wendlebury Meads & Mansmoor Closes SSSI [CD/2.31] concludes that with the provision of standard design mitigation the proposed access tracks will have no impact on the surface water and shallow groundwater hydrology of the SSSI.

*Gosford and Water Eaton Number 4, Ian Gilder*

- 3.19 The Representor would prefer to see the location of the existing crossing and the alignment of the right of way retained. The Representor states that the proposed diversion alongside the A34 is unsatisfactory and would discourage cycling due to noise, debris, parked vehicles, poor surfacing, plus the width and maintenance of the vegetation.
- 3.20 As stated in paragraph 11.86 of Ian Gilder's evidence [CRCL/P/12/A], when developing the footpath diversions, Chiltern Railways consulted in August 2009 on

two alternatives for the diversion of Gosford and Water Eaton Number 4 [FP 229/4]. The list of organisations who were consulted is set out in Annex B of the Public Rights of Way Report [CD/1.11]. The diversion along the A34 and A4165, which is now included as part of the proposed Order, was favoured by the majority of consultees, including the County Council. The advantages of this diversion were seen to be that it gave better and more direct access to Water Eaton Parkway station, especially from Kidlington whilst the proposed diversion of [BR 229/5] maintains a rural and quiet recreational route with safe access over the A34 in this part of the public rights of way network.

- 3.21 As stated in paragraph 11.80 of Ian Gilder's evidence [CRCL/P/12/A], the public right of way is not a bridleway and there are no rights for use by cyclists.

*Water Eaton Bridleway 5, Ian Gilder*

- 3.22 The Representor is expecting that the diverted bridleway will be surfaced with a similar (good) quality surface to existing concrete track.
- 3.23 Ian Gilder responds to this point in paragraph 11.79 of his proof of evidence [CRCL/P/12/A] confirming that a hard surfaced track will be provided.

*General Points on Cycle Parking, Allan Dare*

- 3.24 The Representor is looking for cycle parking to be under cover, secure and convenient to use and in particular supports the use of 'Sheffield' stands. The Objector would like the proposed numbers of cycle parking to be regarded as a minimum and provided when the Scheme opens. The Representor is looking for Chiltern Railways to support a 'call-a-bike' scheme as an essential part of the Scheme.
- 3.25 All cycle parking (Bicester Town, Islip, Water Eaton Parkway) will be secure, with lockable racks such as Sheffield stands, in prominent areas, and with CCTV surveillance. Chiltern Railways fully recognises the problems that the Objector outlines with front-wheel holding stands, and will not be using these. Chiltern Railways plans to provide sufficient capacity to meet forecast demand through to 2026, but there will also be the ability to switch capacity between car and cycle parking to meet emerging trends.

*Cycle Parking Provision at Bicester Town Station, Allan Dare*

- 3.26 The Representor would have liked to have seen evidence of the potential numbers of cyclists within the cycling catchment area of Bicester Town who would use the cycle parking facility. In the absence of this, the proposed 60 spaces are deemed to be acceptable to the Representor provided they are properly monitored and maintained.
- 3.27 Chiltern Railways will provide a minimum of 60 cycle parking spaces at Bicester Town station. These will be covered and secure, with lockable Sheffield stands, and with CCTV surveillance, and will be properly maintained. In addition 20 secure cycle lockers will be provided. Chiltern Railways will keep the take-up of cycle parking capacity under review and will add further cycle stands if justified by demand.

- 3.28 This amplifies the points set out in the correspondence and in Stephen Barker's proof of evidence [CRCL/6/P/A].

*Cycle Parking Provision at Islip Station, Allan Dare*

- 3.29 The Representor reports that they could find no mention of proposals for cycle parking at Islip station and seeks clarification that existing provision is adequate. The Representor makes the assertion that Islip station will have an increased importance as a railhead and seeks footfall and likely demand information for future cycle parking. The Representor seeks clarity on how the instatement of a second platform will change the way cyclists come and go and park their bikes.
- 3.30 It is envisaged that the main railhead for the area will be Water Eaton Parkway station, and that Islip station will continue as a facility for the local community. The present cycle parking capacity (10 spaces) will be retained as visits to the station indicate that the present use of the cycle stands is very low and 10 spaces are considered sufficient for the future. However, the position will be kept under review and further cycle spaces will be added if justified by demand.
- 3.31 The cycle parking will be under cover, and with CCTV surveillance. The cycle parking will be adjacent to the entrance to the platform, and with level access to trains. When the line is doubled a footbridge will be constructed from this point to the new second platform. There will also be a step-free ramp from Bletchingdon Road to the new platform, which will be available for cyclists wishing to take their bikes onto the train. This is confirmed in Stephen Barker's proof of evidence paragraph 4.209 [CRCL/6/P/A].

*Cycle Parking Provision at Water Eaton Station, Allan Dare*

- 3.32 The Representor feels that the proposed 100 cycle spaces may be inadequate given the levels of planned development in the area. The Representor seeks clarity on how this figure has been arrived at.
- 3.33 The 100 space figure is derived from the overall demand forecast for passenger numbers at the station, and the distance from the passengers' origin point. However the position will be kept under review and further cycle spaces will be added if justified by demand.

*Cycle Parking Provision at Oxford Station, Allan Dare*

- 3.34 The Representor is concerned about the unsatisfactory situation at Oxford station which is claimed needs better management. The Representor encourages a joint approach with all parties to develop a long term solution which could include new cycle parking, storage and a retail facility giving the example of DB [Chiltern Railways' parent company] in Germany. The Representor questions whether Chiltern Railways has seriously considered taking this approach.

- 3.35 The Station Facility Operator at Oxford station is First Great Western (FGW), as designated in the FGW Franchise Agreement. This will not change as a result of the Order Scheme. The provision of cycle parking and other facilities is thus a matter for FGW. However, Chiltern Railways is already working with FGW, Network Rail and the local authorities to consider future plans for the station, and it is envisaged that this will continue. This amplifies the points set out in the correspondence and in Stephen Barker's proof of evidence [CRCL/6/P/A].

*Cycle Access to Stations, Allan Dare*

- 3.36 The Representor encourages Chiltern Railways to work with Oxfordshire County Council and other organisations to give priority to cycle access to the stations, in particular Water Eaton Parkway and Oxford stations. In relation to Oxford station, it is suggested that improvements are required to access to/from Botley Road, Frideswide Square, Hythe Bridge Street and Jericho. Further, the links between the Park and Ride site and Oxford are considered to be unsatisfactory. The Representor stresses the importance of cycle links to the proposed North Oxford Gateway and the existing Peartree Park and Ride are important alongside cycle crossings of main roads in the area.
- 3.37 Chiltern Railways does not have powers to make cycling improvements outside the Order Scheme limits and these are properly a matter for the local authorities. However, Chiltern Railways anticipates entering into an agreement with Oxfordshire County Council to encourage the use of non-motorised modes, including cycle, to and from Water Eaton Parkway and Bicester Town stations and to provide sufficient good quality facilities for cyclists at these stations. This agreement will include the provision of cycling infrastructure to the stations; the provision of cycling infrastructure at the stations; and the ongoing review of cycle parking capacity.
- 3.38 At Water Eaton Parkway station, there will be a dedicated cycleway between the cycle route along the A4165 and the cycle parking area. This will be completely segregated from the main road. The junction leading from the main highway to the station and bus Park and Ride terminus will also be simplified and remodelled, which will benefit all modes of transport to/from the station.
- 3.39 As noted above, matters at Oxford station are the responsibility of the Station Facility Operator, First Great Western.
- 3.40 This amplifies the points set out in the Correspondence and in Stephen Barker's proof of evidence [CRCL/6/P/A].

*Carriage of Cycles on Trains, Allan Dare*

- 3.41 The Objector considers that the provision for the carriage of cycles on trains is very important. The Objector urges that the design of trains should take these needs into account and there should be a simple procedure for travelling with a bicycle.
- 3.42 Chiltern Railways' existing policy for the carriage of cycles on train will continue. This allows cycles to be taken on any train, except on trains arriving at London Marylebone and Birmingham Snow Hill between 07:45 and 10:00 Monday to Friday, or leaving these stations between 16:30 and 19:30 Monday to Friday. No charge is

made for cycles and no booking is required. Chiltern Railways will also allow the carriage of cycles on all trains between Bicester, Islip, Water Eaton Parkway and Oxford at any time, subject to emerging demand and any change in policy that may be imposed by the Station Facility Operator at Oxford station. Folding bicycles can be carried at all times. Cycle parking is provided at all stations.

- 3.43 Chiltern Railways services will normally be operated with Diesel Multiple Unit trains with double doors and wide vestibules, and at least one wheelchair/bicycle area on each train. These arrangements do not apply to tandems, motor scooters or motor bikes. This amplifies the points set out in the correspondence.

#### **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 This rebuttal responds comprehensively to the evidence presented by the Representor.
- 4.2 The rebuttal provides reasoning for design solution at various crossings along the route that the Representor has questioned. The evidence of Stephen Barker [CRCL/P/4/A] and Ian Gilder [CRCL/P/12/A] provide further details on these crossings.
- 4.3 Chiltern Railways is enhancing facilities for cyclists at stations and will maintain its company policy for taking bicycles on trains. Chiltern Railways is actively working with stakeholders such as First Great Western, Network Rail and the local authorities to consider future plans for improvement of facilities at Oxford station.

Appendix A

CRCL/R/REP12

Relevant Correspondence  
between Chiltern Railways  
and the Objector



REP/12

Caroline O'Neill

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**From:** Philip Ashbourn [phillip.ashbourn@talk21.com]  
**Sent:** 17 February 2010 15:27  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Subject:** CHILTERN RAILWAYS EVERGREEN 3 PROJECT  
**Attachments:** CHILTERN RAILWAYS EVERGREEN 3 PROJECT.doc

Dear DFT

I attach the CTC representation.

While we are very supportive of the upgraded railway and most of the detailed proposals (eg bridges at bridleway crossings, cycle parking) we look forward to a comprehensive approach to land use/transport planning in the railway catchment area that would seek to reduce trip lengths and maximise cycling and walking and minimise motor vehicle traffic. We would expect Oxfordshire County Council to play a key role in this.

We are also keen to see a dialogue established between ourselves and other cycling organisations with the Chiltern Railways project team, Oxfordshire County Council and other interested bodies. The project could be a catalyst for exciting initiatives.

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T 01908 698063

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17/02/2010

## CHILTERN RAILWAYS EVERGREEN 3 PROJECT CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB (CTC) REPRESENTATION

### INTRODUCTION

Although the initial consultation was addressed to the CTC National Office this representation has been produced by CTC local Right to Ride representatives and the CTC Public Transport consultant listed at the end

However, we are aware that other cycling organisations will be making representations and, therefore, our comments should be read in conjunction with these.

The CTC is generally supports the proposals. They would expand the bicycle/train mixed mode transport possibilities. They would form a vital part of the east-west Bedford/Milton Keynes/Bicester/Oxford railway reinstatement. They would reduce motor vehicle usage and the associated problems. They would provide new bridges on existing cycle routes to replace the existing level crossings and divert routes as necessary. They would provide cycle parking at existing and new stations.

We are, however, concerned that the Rights of Way report failed to recognise that cyclists have had a legal right to cycle on public bridleways since 1968. Hence, the importance of the bridleway level crossings.

The CTC detailed comments are set out below.

### LEVEL CROSSINGS

Can wheeling ramps be provided on footbridges with steps?

Works No 8

This will have a substantial height having to cross a new embankment. It would be accessible and have a smaller footprint if a subway was provided before the embankment was built. It would also permit the route to be maintained during building works.

Tubbs Crossing (Works No 9)

The crossing is on the route of the National Cycle Network Route 51 between Milton Keynes and Oxford and is therefore especially important to cyclists. Sustrans, the promoter of the NCN, will comment additionally direct.

The CTC notes the proposal for a bridge and the substantial area needed for ramps to take the lane up to cross the railway at the required height. This will create a substantial visual intrusion, presenting a significant deterioration in privacy to neighbouring property, and add a considerable increase in the distance travelled to go up and down. Given a) the ground levels on both sides of the line, b) the rising formation of the new chord to the London-Birmingham lines close by, and c) the near to square crossing alignment, can the alternative provision of a wide through sighting subway be offered, with ramps about half the length as those proposed and substantially less land take up as the bridge approach ramps?

We note the concerns over drainage but we are aware of rail underpass layouts where the span is shared evenly between a cycle route and watercourse with the latter above the level of the path surface and a natural drainage arrangement to take any water overtopping the water channel to a discharge point downhill. In the Tubbs Lane case it would appear feasible to lead water alongside the branch of the path heading south (not the right of way heading east) and running parallel to the watercourse, until a gravity/natural drainage system can discharge into the stream or local drainage network.

Noting the historic severance many years earlier of Gavray Drive and the complete removal of the connection to Launton Road this may present an alternative or additional crossing point to consider, especially if the development indicated takes place north of Gavray Drive and the provision to reserve a reinstatement of a crossing (grade separated) at this point be made.

We note that Cyclists Dismount signs are proposed. These are not desirable. We recommend the advice contained in LTN 2/08 (p20-1) along with notes in TSRGD chapter 3 (p155) relating to the use of diagram 966 signs be followed.

#### London Road Crossing

This is a skew crossing presenting an increased risk of cyclists falling off when a tyre strikes a vertical edge running close to the direction of travel and is deflected sideways. We note the concerns relating to the crossing width and conditions presented to pedestrians, especially pram and wheelchair traffic by skew rail crossings with no space to square up to cross the flangeways/vertical ridges. There are possible measures, which can be applied when the crossing is rebuilt for a double track railway, to remove the hazard and modify the way motor vehicles use the crossing. With the nearby A41 bridge providing the crossing point for non local traffic travelling at speed this could present the opportunity to design the crossing and road alignment to remove the option of running through the lights and control traffic speeds entering the main developed area of Bicester. There are clearly major areas provided for car parking north and south of the railway in this area and Oxfordshire County Council should work with Chiltern Railways to develop direct links to the A41 and thus reduce traffic levels through Bicester creating better conditions for cyclists and other non motorised traffic.

We note that an extension of Station Approach through the former goods yard and an extension to the car park could be connected to the A41 north of the railway, possibly providing a car parking capacity option for passengers travelling in from Chesterton and Ambrosden/Arncott. This would remove this traffic and its potential growth from Bicester town centre and by linking it with the Bicester Village Outlet potentially improving use of the extensive car parking capacity where the balance of demand for commuter parking may complement the times of peak demand for shoppers. Access to parking in this area can avoid motor traffic using the crossing.

#### Langford Lane Crossing

We support the proposed bridge and diverted highway that will maintain the through cycling route.

#### Mansmoor Lane/Holts Farm/BBONT Crossing

We support the proposed bridge. We are confused by the proposed new right of way linking in south of the crossing. We can find no trace on the Rights of Way plans of the right of way to be permanently stopped up. Please clarify.

We would encourage Chiltern Railways working with Oxfordshire County to improve the grassed bridleway on both sides of the railway. These are prone to severe flooding. On our recent survey we were unable to proceed along the route on the north side even having the appropriate outdoor equipment.

#### Oddington Road Crossing

We support the proposed bridge.

#### Islip (Mill Lane) Crossing

We support the proposed bridge.

#### Water Eaton Bridleway 5 Crossing

We support the proposed bridge and diverted bridleway. However, as most of the bridleway between Gosford and Oxford Road has a concrete surface it is well used by cyclists. We would therefore expect the diverted length to have a similar quality surface.

#### Water Eaton Bridleway 4 Crossing

We would prefer to see a bridge at the location of the crossing and the bridleway retain its existing alignment. The proposed diversion along the A34 would be unsatisfactory, as those who have cycled on the existing cycle routes running alongside know only too well. Noise and air pollution, debris, parked motor vehicles including food vendors, inadequate width and poor surface and vegetation maintenance discourage cycling.

#### CYCLE PARKING

##### Generally

Cycle parking should be under cover, secure (ie not hidden from view) and convenient to use. The proposed numbers of spaces should be regarded as minimum provision and should be provided in full when the project opens. At the same time adjacent space should be protected from development to provide for extra cycle parking. Sheffield stands are recommended for simplicity and ease of use. However, for higher parking densities and higher levels of security other types may be necessary. Front wheel holding stands should never be used. They bend wheels and lack means to fully secure the whole bicycle.

The parent company of Chiltern Railways (DB) has, through its subsidiary operation DB Rent, provided a high standard of managed cycle parking and cycle hire where appropriate. Call-a-Bike is a DB owned operation. We consider that a similar commitment to delivery of the whole journey be an essential part of the proposals. These should show measures to minimise any increase in motor vehicle traffic generated by the new railway and the same time to maximise non motorised traffic.

For example, the demand for cycling from residential areas and other generators, such as business parks, where the distances are cycleable, should be met by measures to provide crossings of major road, railway and river barriers separating stations from journey origins. This helps to reduce motor traffic surges, peak time congestion and car parking demand from short trip traffic, releasing road and parking space for those travelling in from greater distances.

Consideration should be given to identify Section 106 commitments from developers of relevant sites to promote rail use and at the same time railway development should make provision for future development.

#### Bicester

We note the high cost of providing two-level car parking at Bicester North and the constraint/congestion impact issues from the limits of the unchanged access and connections with local roads. We would like to have seen a review of the potential numbers within the cycling catchment area who would use the cycle parking and access to/from the station. For example, a review in Dorking found that 65% of rail season ticket holders own a bicycle compared to 49% nationally. We note also that the Better Stations report identified a pay back period of 10 to 15 years for car parking with the implied costs for sustainability and related impacts.

In the absence of any such review the proposed 60 spaces are acceptable provided, as stated above, that the situation is regularly managed and monitored to promote the cycle-rail connection for Bicester residents

#### Islip

We could find no mention of proposals for cycle parking. Are we to assume that the existing is held to be adequate? Given the increased importance of Islip station as the railhead, not only for the village but also for the surrounding area and future developments within cycling distance, can you give the likely footfall and demand for future cycle parking? The re-instatement of the second platform will change the way cyclists come and go and park. Please clarify.

#### Water Eaton

We feel that the proposed 100 spaces may be inadequate given that we understand that residential and business developments are planned in the area. How has this figure been arrived at? ECF Report Review 133 highlighted the significant range of 1.5 to 4 kilometres for over 60% of rail users using Dutch stations. Much of Kidlington, therefore, lies within this range.

#### Oxford

We are concerned there are no proposals to deal with the existing unsatisfactory situation at Oxford. This is clearly an eyesore, needing better management. We would encourage a joint approach by all parties, but with Chiltern Railways taking the lead, to develop a long-term solution. This could include a new cycle parking/storage/retail facility, such as built by NS in the Netherlands and by DB (Chiltern Railways' parent company) in Germany to provide for existing and future cycle parking users. Have Chiltern Railways made a serious study of doing this?

Oxford has been identified by the DfT Better Stations report as a Category B national interchange station with a minimum requirement of a cycle hub with secure cycle storage covering 5% of daily footfall using the station. We need evidence that this has been noted and will be met. We note that the National Rail Stations Made Easy information has no details of the number of cycle parking spaces available. Our figure from 2003 is 504 spaces from 252 stands in an open uncovered area. Current footfall indicates that an increase of about 50% is needed.

#### CYCLE ACCESS

We would encourage Chiltern Railways working with Oxfordshire County Council and other bodies to ensure that cycle access to the stations is given priority. We are particularly concerned about access to Oxford station and to the proposed Water Eaton station. In the former case cycle access needs to be improved to/from Botley Road, Frideswide Square, Hythe Bridge Street and Jericho. The existing cycle routes between the Park and Ride and Oxford are unsatisfactory. The bus lane is narrow while the shared use pedestrian/cycle track is also narrow and poorly surfaced. Cycle links to the proposed North Oxford Gateway and the existing Peartree Park and Ride are important, as are cycle crossings of the main roads in the area. At the same time links are needed to popular destinations. We support the cycle link to Bicester Village Outlet.

#### TRAINS

The provision for the carriage of cycles on trains is as important to cyclists as cycle parking. We urge that the design of the trains to use the line should take into account the needs of cyclists with, say, a minimum of six spaces per three or four coach train. There should be a simple procedure for travelling with a bicycle.

#### CONCLUSION

While, the CTC is generally very supportive of the proposals, there are several issues that we have highlighted that we should like to see resolved. We also look forward to a comprehensive approach to land use/transport planning in the railway catchment area that would seek to reduce trip lengths and maximise cycling and walking and minimise motor vehicle traffic. We would expect Oxfordshire County to play a key role in this. May we suggest a meeting between Chiltern Railways, its consultants, local authorities and cycling organisations to agree acceptable solutions? None of us, I am sure, wish to see these issues left to a public inquiry.

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James Dawton  
Peter England  
Right to Ride Representatives  
Dave Holladay  
Public Transport Consultant  
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17 February 2010

Phillip Ashbourn MA MTRPI  
29 Kemble Court  
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18th May 2010

Your ref:  
Our ref: REP 12

Dear Mr. Ashbourn

## **Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) TWA Order Application**

I refer to your letter of 6th February to the Secretary of State for Transport, submitting a formal representation regarding our "Evergreen 3" proposals for upgrading the railway between Oxford and Bicester.

We very much welcome your overall support for the railway project, and for its potential to provide an alternative to the private car for a wide range of journeys.

With regard to the detailed points that you raise:

**Level Crossings:** We will not be providing wheeling ramps on stepped footbridges, as these can create water traps and thus bring maintenance problems. However, all the bridleway bridges will have ramp access, as will most of the footbridges. This is in accordance with DDA legislation, and the exceptions are at locations where the levels of use are very low and the use of wheelchairs (and thus cycles) is impractical due to impediments along the access route.

**Works No. 8:** A subway would not be practical in this location. The surrounding area is subject to flooding, and the approach footpath is often obstructed by water. A subway would thus require pumped drainage, which represent significant on-going maintenance costs compared to a bridge. Subways also present a perceived risk to personal security, and design guidance issued by the Highways Agency advises against their use in "urban and peri-urban areas" for this reason

It should be possible to keep the footpath open throughout the construction period even with a footbridge.

**Tubbs Lane:** We have examined in some detail the possibility of providing a subway at this location. However, it would suffer from the same problems of flooding and perceived security as noted above (the latter is particularly important at Tubbs Lane due to the number of children using the crossing). In addition, the constricted space on the Launton Road side would result in an overly-steep access ramp; maintenance access to the adjacent electricity substation would be difficult; additional land that is currently "public open space" would be required; and an inaccessible area of land would be created in the "V" between the paths and the nearest houses on the estate side.

**London Road Crossing:** The rebuilt crossing surface will be designed to comply with latest standards. There is inadequate space to realign the road in order to provide a perpendicular crossing, but we have made provision for the widening of the footways to improve the situation for pedestrians.

Speed limits and traffic flow along London Road are a matter for the highways authority, and outwith our competence. However, London Road is the main vehicle route from the south into the town centre, so the opportunities to divert traffic via the A41 may be limited.

We will be providing a pedestrian and cycling link from the rebuilt Bicester Town station to Bicester Village, and hence the A41 via Pingle Drive. However, general policy in the area is to avoid creating a "rat-run" for motorists between London Road and Pingle Drive due to congestion on the latter. This would also require us to acquire further land in third-party ownership.

**Langford Lane crossing; Mansmoor Lane/Holts Farm/BBONT crossing; Oddington Road Crossing; Islip (Mill Lane) crossing; Water Eaton No. 5 crossing:** Your support for our bridge proposals is appreciated, and your comments on surfacing, etc. are noted.

**Water Eaton No., 4 crossing:** This is a footpath crossing, rather than a bridleway. Maintaining the original route would have involved going across the site of the relocated stone terminal, whilst retaining the present unsatisfactory at-grade crossing across the A34. In addition the footpath was very overgrown when we surveyed it, indicating low levels of use.

**Cycle parking:** All cycle parking (Bicester Town, Islip, Water Eaton Parkway) will be secure, with lockable racks such as Sheffield stands, in prominent areas, and with CCTV surveillance. We fully recognise the problems that you outline with front-wheel holding stands, and will not be using these. Our plans provide sufficient capacity for forecast demand through to 2026, with the ability to switch capacity between car and cycle parking to meet emerging trends.

**Bicester Town station:** This station serves a wide rural area as well as Bicester itself, and adequate car parking will thus be important. However, we will be working with the North-West Bicester eco-town promoters and the local authorities to encourage access to both Bicester stations by non-motorised means and by bus. We will also monitor cycle use to ensure that adequate bike parking capacity is available over time.

**Islip station:** Current traffic levels at this station are very low. In future we envisage it as a facility for the local community rather than a railhead for the wider area (which will be the role of Water Eaton Parkway). Cycle parking capacity will therefore reflect this, but as at the other stations we have the ability to add capacity if needed.

If and when the second platform is added, cyclists will be able to access this by a new footbridge at roughly the midpoint of the station, and adjacent to the existing car/cycle park.

**Water Eaton Parkway:** We will be able to add further cycle parking capacity if needed. The cycle park will be approached by a dedicated cycleway leading from the cycle route along the A4165. As it is on the main pedestrian route between the rail and bus stations it will be highly visible, and of course monitored by CCTV.

**Oxford station:** Our plans consist of additional platforms at the north end of the station, and therefore do not impinge on the cycle parking area at the south end. Oxford station is managed by First Great Western, and the provision of and day-to-day control of cycle park will continue to be their responsibility. However, we are working with Network Rail, Oxfordshire County Council and others on plans for the long-term development of the station, and your concerns regarding the level and quality of cycle parking are noted.

**Cycle access routes:** We are keen that passengers are aware of the choice of non-motorised modes (and buses/taxis) as an alternative to the private car for access to the stations, and will be considering means for promoting this as we develop our marketing plans for the line.

The provision of cycle routes beyond station limits is a matter for the local authorities, and not in our control. However we would welcome any such developments, and in our discussions with local planners we always make clear the need for safe, well-lit, secure and well-signed routes to stations for both cyclists and pedestrians.

**Bikes on trains:** We will continue with the existing Chiltern Railways policy, i.e. that bikes may be carried on all trains except those arriving at or departing from London and Birmingham at peak periods. We will allow bikes on peak-hour trains to/from Oxford, subject to emerging traffic levels, and to any constraints that may be applied at Oxford station by First Great Western or their successors.

I trust that the above meets with most of your concerns. I would stress that our scheme will be funded entirely from passenger revenue rather than public funding, and our ability to undertake work which is not directly linked to the project is thus limited. However, please be assured that we are keen to ensure that the railway is part of the wider sustainable transport mix. In the meantime, your support is very welcome.

Yours sincerely

Allan Dare  
Strategic Development Manager