

CRCL/P/4/C

**SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF PATRICK O’SULLIVAN
EAST WEST RAIL CONSORTIUM**



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

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS (APPLICATIONS AND OBJECTIONS
PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND AND WALES) RULES 2006**



1. My name is Patrick O'Sullivan and I am a Railway Civil Engineer. I have a B.Sc.(Hons.) in Civil Engineering and I am a Chartered Civil Engineer and Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I am a Divisional Director of Jacobs Engineering UK Ltd on secondment to the East West Rail Consortium. I have experience in the delivery of new railway projects including London Crossrail, Bangkok ISP Blue Line, Taiwan High Speed Rail and the re-opening of Airdrie – Bathgate.
2. Objective 5 sets out, in the Statement of Aims (**CD/1.4**) submitted with the Chiltern Railways application for the Order, that an objective of the Order Scheme is to 'Facilitate the East West Rail Link'
3. My evidence on the EWR link is submitted on behalf of the East West Rail Consortium ('EWRC'). The development work of the western section of EWR is governed by a Project Board. Officials from both the Department for Transport ('DfT') and Network Rail are members of the Project Board. My evidence has been endorsed by the Project Board.
4. The railway dates back to 1851 when the line between Oxford and Bletchley opened. Further lines were added later. Over a hundred years later, in 1959, plans to close the railway emerged. The closure was fiercely opposed by local councils and MPs
5. The Beeching Report of 1963 even recommended the route be retained. Nevertheless, in a moment of supreme irony, the closure of the railway to passenger services took place at the end of 1967 at the very time the planning of Milton Keynes was getting underway.
6. It is not surprising that Milton Keynes has recently been assessed as a city "designed for the car", where public transport is a "poor alternative" as well as being judged to be the most car-dependent town ahead of many other conurbations.
7. Pressure to reopen the railway started almost immediately after the railway closed and has continued ever since. Much work has been undertaken to prove the case for re-opening and these efforts culminated in 1995, when a number of local authorities formed the EWRC to review options for EWR Links. Fast forwarding to today, we are able to record that progress to realise the re-opening of this important rail link is now well advanced.
8. The EWR link is being planned in three distinct phases, namely, the eastern section between Ipswich and Norwich to Cambridge, the central section between Cambridge and Bedford and the western section between Bedford and Oxford. The eastern section is already in place. The central section is at an earlier stage of development.
9. The western section of the EWR link is a scheme that has been evaluated independently of the other two parts of the overall route. Accordingly, my evidence concerns the basis upon which the EWRC is able to deliver, within a reasonable timescale, the implementation of the western section
10. The Order Scheme and the western section of EWR have been designed to be compatible with each other. The Order Scheme works make specific provision for all of the key physical railway works needed for EWR services between Oxford and Bicester.
11. The development of the western section has reached GRIP Stage 4. The outline design and capital cost estimate, which includes drawings and technical specifications of the

necessary railway infrastructure, and a draft Outline Business Case report were completed in June 2010. A strong business case exists for the western section with an exceptional benefit to cost ratio (BCR) of 6.3:1

12. The purpose of EWR is to connect, by rail, important growth areas and support balanced growth of houses and jobs. It will provide flexibility in the national rail network and offer alternative diversion routes. Above all it will provide a real and sustainable transport alternative to the use of the trunk road network in the area where there is no high capacity road network linking the key centres of Milton Keynes, Bicester, Aylesbury and Oxford.
13. It will provide savings on road infrastructure expenditure, reduce accidents, reduce air pollution and reduce carbon emissions and noise. In particular, road users will derive considerable benefits in journey time savings. For instance, a car journey from Oxford to Milton Keynes can take between 70 and 90 minutes, whereas by train it will take only 40 minutes.
14. It will provide for new railway services and new railway track on the national network. It will thus be available to other passenger and freight train operators, with access governed by Network Rail and the Office of Rail Regulation.
15. Since the inception of the Evergreen 3 project the EWRC has been working closely with Chiltern Railways in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 2009 between the parties.
16. The delivery of the Evergreen 3 project by Chiltern Railways provides significant cost benefits (estimated at c. £100 million) to EWR as a substantial proportion of the railway infrastructure, necessary for the running of EWR trains between Oxford and Bicester, is being delivered by Chiltern Railways. This includes all of the key physical works needed for EWR trains services to operate on this part of the western section.
17. The railway infrastructure required for this scheme is shown in the slide (Figure 2) in front of you. The final scheme conforms to the scope of works and powers sought by the Chiltern Railways Order scheme.
18. The EWRC is now progressing with two essential strategies in parallel with each other to secure the delivery of the western section of EWR. The first is to secure the funding for the implementation of the capital scheme and the second is to select a suitable partner or partners to deliver the new railway.
19. The EWRC's target for completion of the implementation phase and for the start of train services is 2017. This is based on the premise that the scheme will be included in the DfT's next long term programme for rail investment, known as the High Level Output Specification (HLOS) for the period 2014-2019.
20. The EWRC will shortly submit a programme entry application to the DfT HLOS funding programme. The EWRC is encouraged by the inclusion of a substantial funding contribution by DfT for the Phase 2A works not required by the Order Scheme that ensures the 'future proofing of the east west route' for national rail network strategic objectives.

21. There is evidence that the coalition government supports the drive for more housing and the EWRC will be co-ordinating, with local planning authorities, funding contributions from housing developers via requirements set out in the planning process.
22. Funding through the Regulated Asset Base ('RAB') will be explored and this is a similar method to that used by Chiltern Railways for delivery of the Order Scheme. The capital cost is met by Network Rail borrowing requirements, The EWRC is forecasting a positive revenue return and this revenue, together with track access charges, can be used to repay the investment either to the RAB or another funding agency.
23. Prior to the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies and the regional agencies, EWR had been identified as a regional investment priority in support of the South East Plan. With the removal of regional agencies a number of Local Enterprise Partnerships are now in the process of being established to provide the necessary strategic functions which includes the prioritisation of transport Infrastructure.
24. The western section is promoted as a key piece of enabling infrastructure within three geographically relevant Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP); namely Oxfordshire, Thames Valley Buckinghamshire and South East Midlands. These LEP's offer a primary enabling route for the acquisition of the necessary development funding and in contributing towards funding of the capital scheme.
25. In total these elements that make up the different sources of funding are likely to provide for the necessary funding for delivery of the western section of EWR by 2017.
26. The EWRC, in selecting a preferred method of programme delivery, will be working with the DfT and Network Rail. The primary choices are between the:
 - establishment of a legal entity formed of local authorities within the footprint of EWR to promote and enable project implementation;
 - establishment of a delivery partner (one or a combination of Train Operator, Network Rail, DfT) to implement the scheme.
27. The EWRC will also begin planning for the likely requirement for a Transport and Works Act Order application.
28. In conclusion, the EWRC has established a strong business case for the implementation of the western section of the EWR link which provides grounds for there being a reasonable prospect of the scheme being funded and delivered within the timeframe to 2017.
29. The EWRC has worked closely with Chiltern Railways to ensure their respective schemes are fully co-ordinated and complementary with each other.
30. The Chiltern Railways' Order scheme makes necessary provision between Oxford and Bicester in terms of land, track capacity and works for EWR western section railway infrastructure and the operation of future train services.
31. The EWRC is now actively progressing with the necessary work to obtain funding approval and with the development planning which will deliver the western section of EWR by 2017.