

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

CHILTERN RAILWAYS' REBUTTAL PROOF OF EVIDENCE

**IN RELATION TO
THE OBJECTION AND EVIDENCE OF
SIR MUIR GRAY**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This rebuttal proof of evidence has been prepared on behalf of the Chiltern Railway Company Limited (Chiltern Railways) to respond to particular aspects of the objection and evidence of Sir Muir Gray.
- 1.2 In particular, Sir Muir Gray has raised new points in his proof of evidence provided for the Inquiry that Chiltern Railways had not previously addressed 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 be a composite response by Chiltern Railways to those new points raised in the evidence of Sir Muir Gray and referred to above. 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 exchanged between Chiltern Railways and Sir Muir Gray dated 12 February 2010, 23 June 2010, 29 July 2010, 18 October

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| | 2010 appended to this rebuttal proof; |
| “the Objector” | means Sir Muir Gray; |
| “the Objector’s evidence” | means the proof of evidence of Sir Muir Gray; |
| “the Order application” | means the application for the proposed Order submitted on 6 January 2010 and the Proposed Modification dated 9 September 2010; and |
| “the proposed Order” | means the proposed Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order. |

3 Chiltern Railways’ Rebuttal of the Objector’s Evidence

Health Impacts from Air Pollution, Ian Gilder

- 3.1 The Objector’s main concern is that the proposal to increase the number of diesel passenger and freight trains will raise important health issues. The Objector maintains that even with modern diesel engines the exhaust fumes will consist of a mixture of chemicals, some in particulate form. The Objector notes that evidence of harm from any form of environmental pollution is difficult to establish conclusively but states that the concept of a ‘safe limit’ as an absolute cut off is untenable. He states that a level signifying the upper, or lower level, allowable is chosen for economic reasons and that *‘it is a point on a continuous distribution relating harm to exposure’*. The Objector also states that the ‘precautionary principle’ is used in health protection when, as he states, as is almost always the case in science, there is uncertainty. The Objector includes a long quote from Lancet journal 2009 on the precautionary principle stating that the *‘meaning and role of the precautionary principle is unsettled and disputed, but at its core is the pervasiveness of scientific uncertainty’* and *‘uncertainty is not a reason to postpone or avoid action. ... It might be objected that this principle adds little to what we expect from good decision making. However decision making can disregard uncertain effects, taking a short-term approach and focusing instead on the certain costs of taking action’*.
- 3.2 The Objector states that the duration of exposure to air pollution is as important as the concentration of the pollutant. The Objector contends that the levels of pollution are unclear as there is no record of the measurements for the ‘Lakeside’ receptor mentioned in section 13.3 of the Environmental Statement [CD/1.16]. However, pollutant levels are of little significance to adults in good health but they are of significance to children. The Objector states that whilst the ES described in detail the risks in relation to ecology there is no mention of the risk to children. The Objector states that there are a number of children living in the vicinity of the railway line who play in their gardens as well as the Wolvercote Primary School with 240 pupils that has a number of classes and activities that take place outside.
- 3.3 The Objector is correct to note that the duration of exposure to air pollution is an important factor in determining health effects through such exposure. This is why air quality standards are expressed in terms of both short term exposure to peak concentrations (measured in minutes or hours) and for long term exposure (typically measured as an annual average).

- 3.4 The assessment carried out for the EIA has made predictions of the additional concentrations of pollutants for all relevant averaging periods. In Table 13.11 of the ES, the results can be seen expressed for twenty one locations as both an annual average and as a variety of short term peak concentrations reflecting the air quality standard relevant to each pollutant. The incremental concentrations (ie those arising from the trains using the railway line) are explicitly and clearly set out in the ES and obtained through the use of a dispersion model. (Receptors R8 and R9 refer to Wolvercote Primary School and Lakeside.) The existing concentrations are estimated from measurements made by Oxford City Council at locations across the city and by Defra at rural locations in Oxfordshire.
- 3.5 The possible effects on children are not described explicitly. Instead the impacts are evaluated against the air quality standards established to protect the more vulnerable members of the population, including children. Air quality standards used in the European Union are derived from World Health Organization guidelines that reflect the opinions of the leading academic community active in the science of air pollution and health and these guidelines are based on the lowest concentrations known to affect the most vulnerable members of the population.
- 3.6 It is clear from the modelling results that the likely additional concentrations of particulate matter at the locations of interest attributable to the Scheme are very small in relation to the appropriate air quality standard; less than 1% in all cases. Particulate matter is recognised as being the most significant pollutant in respect of air pollution and health and is often cited in relation to emissions from diesel engines. The incremental concentrations of NO_x are larger, as a percentage of the relevant air quality standard, but the overall annual average concentration will be far below the concentration of 40 µg m⁻³ used as the air quality limit value.
- 3.7 Although the City Council does not take measurements of NO₂ or PM₁₀ in the Wolvercote or Cutteslowe areas, it does have an extensive monitoring programme across the city that provides a clear picture of air quality in locations that are 'urban background' or 'roadside' in character. Concentrations of NO₂ and PM₁₀ vary significantly according to the proximity of major roads. The confidence in the pollutant concentrations used as estimates of the 'background' or 'existing' concentration is very high.

Evidence on the Effects of Air Pollution, Ian Gilder

- 3.8 The Objector makes reference to the large body of research that is available about the effects of diesel, sulphur dioxide and nitrous dioxide. Whilst recognising that a number of the reports may be of variable quality they present strong evidence that there are harmful effects, particularly lung diseases, of air pollution resulting from transport and health problems due to diesel particulates and in part due to the chemicals carried on these particulates. The Objector states that there is no debate about the relationship between pollutants and lung diseases and that even particulate traps do not remove all pollutants and that the children in the community need to be protected from pollution.
- 3.9 The Objector's general point that air pollution, especially associated with emissions from transport, is responsible for health effects at the population level is valid. It is

why government at local, national and European level has policies to measure and to improve air quality. Many of these policies are aimed at reducing emissions from road traffic, which is largely responsible for the high concentrations of PM₁₀, PM_{2.5} and NO₂ observed in towns and cities.

- 3.10 In this specific case, the key point is that the increased exposure to air pollution attributable to the Scheme for people living or working close to the railway is actually very small, especially with regard to PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5}, the pollutants for which the scientific evidence of associated health effects is most compelling.

Air Quality Monitoring, Ian Gilder

- 3.11 The Objector is seeking monitoring of the current level of pollution to allow for an appropriate assessment of the risk.
- 3.12 Although there is no current measurement by Oxford City Council of pollutant concentrations in Wolvercote, there are extensive measurements in many other parts of the city. (See Oxford Airwatch for details: <http://www.oxford-airwatch.aeat.co.uk>) These measurements are more than adequate for describing air quality in north Oxford at 'urban background' locations, as Lakeside and Wolvercote Primary School can be described in air quality terms. There is no virtue in making additional measurements at these locations. The assessment of impacts at these locations is instead more properly made by quantifying the additional concentrations arising from the operation of the railway line. This quantification has been achieved by the use of a widely recognised dispersion model.

Alternative Tunnel Solution, Stephen Barker

- 3.13 The Objector recommends that the most effective protection from air pollution would be to construct a tunnel along the section of line close to the Lakeside area.
- 3.14 Any such structure would be sizeable. The internal dimensions of the structure would need to provide adequate clearances for future electrification of the route and for safe evacuation trains in the event of an emergency. The cost of constructing such a structure would be considerable and the structure would substantially increase the ongoing maintenance costs as a result not only of the cost of inspecting and maintaining the tunnel structure itself but also because of the additional costs of maintaining the rest of the infrastructure within the confined space within the tunnel. Given the necessary size of the structure, it would have a considerable visual impact on adjacent properties.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Although the objector raises a number of concerns regarding the air quality impact of the proposed Order Scheme on residents, specifically children, it is considered that the assessments undertaken to date are in line with existing policy and industry best practice and are therefore sufficiently robust to assess the impacts of the Scheme on air quality. The Environmental Statement [CD/1.16] concludes that there are not likely to be significant impacts on air quality either in the short or long term.

4.2 A 'tunnel' over the railway would be costly, have significant adverse visual impact and is unnecessary as a means to mitigate air pollution or noise impacts.

Appendix A

CRCL/R/OBJ149

Relevant Correspondence
between Chiltern Railways
and the Objector

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT 2010 Transport and Works Act 1992
 Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006
 THE CHILTERN RAILWAYS (BICESTER TO OXFORD IMPROVEMENTS) ORDER

| | | |
|--|------------|-----------------|
| OBJ/149 | OBJECTIONS | RECEIVED IN |
| TO: The Secretary of State for Transport, Department for Transport c/o TWA Orders Unit, Zone 1/31, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR Email: transportandworksact@dft.gsi.gov.uk | | 16 FEB 2010 |
| THIS MUST BE RETURNED BY 17 TH FEBRUARY 2010 TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS | | TWA ORDERS UNIT |

I object to the proposed scheme for the following reasons: (please place tick or cross in box if you agree)

| | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Individual concerns have not been properly addressed |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Since the start of the consultation process, there has been an incremental and significant increase in numbers of trains; new passenger timetable (May 2009), trains on Sundays, more freight trains |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The new track will bring trains closer to my property which will increase noise and vibration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Faster trains will increase noise and vibration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Freight trains will be longer and carry larger loads which will increase noise and vibration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Trains can be heard above the background noise in my house, such as the television, boiler, fridge, etc., even when the windows are closed. The noise and vibration from passing trains is overwhelming in the garden and in my house if the windows are open. With many more trains, living in adjacent properties to the railway line will become intolerable, our neighbourhood will be destroyed by both the exodus of those people that can afford to move and by a fall in quality of the area. This will inevitably impact on the value of my house making moving to a similarly pleasant location (as now) within Oxford much more difficult |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | As transport by rail increases, the numbers of passenger and freight trains will continue to increase incrementally once the scheme is complete leading to further increases in noise and vibration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Pollution levels in the immediate vicinity already exceed EU statutory guidelines, and these will be further exacerbated |
| Any other comments (please use an additional sheet, if necessary) | |

I urge Chiltern Railways and/or Network Rail to: (please place tick or cross in box if you agree)

| | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ensure that everything possible is done to reduce the impact of the increased train service, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of fully-effective noise and vibration barriers next to the track as a matter of urgency concurrent with the work, • install track infrastructure designed to reduce noise and vibration including welded track, rail dampers, etc., • use only well maintained rolling stock fitted with noise and vibration mitigating devices including wheel dampers, etc., • use trains that retain sanitary waste for off-track disposal, and • review all noise and vibration mitigating measures every six months and repair or upgrade as necessary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Base mitigation on the numbers of passenger and (longer, heavier) freight trains projected to operate after completion of EastWest Rail and then no subsequent incremental increases in train traffic allowed without full consultation with residents |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Provide funding to equip my house with the highest quality glazing and to undertake any repairs to my house caused by vibration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Maintain and enforce the present speed restriction (40 mph) on all trains along the sections of the track adjoining residential areas |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No trains during the night from 00:00 until 05:00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Electrify the line as soon as practically possible |
| Any other comments (please use an additional sheet, if necessary) | |

FROM: Signed Muir & Jackie Gray
 Print Name MR MUIR & JACKIE GRAY
 Address 59 Lakewick
Oxford OX2 8JH

Date 12 February 2010

Additional Comment from Sir Muir and Lady Gray, 59 Lakeside, Oxford OX2 8JQ

The very highest priority MUST be given to mitigating measures of the proposals to those of us living in Lakeside whose back gardens face the railway line. The LINE IS RAISED above the ground level of our gardens BY SEVERAL METRES. It is therefore incumbent on Chiltern Rail to install screening which will eliminate

- the diesel pollution,
- the noise, and
- the visual intrusion of these trains.

It is of course true that we all knew of the existence of the railway line when we purchased our houses, BUT the present use of a barely occupied 2 carriage train at 40 mph several times a day does not in any way equate to a high-speed service at 70-100mph every 15 minutes, PLUS freight trains night and day. This will in effect mean that our gardens are unusable unless the measures below are addressed.

Therefore:

(1) A lowering of the track MUST be considered (at a recent meeting into the Department of Transport, Lord Adonis asked that this suggestion be looked into).

(2) Full visual and noise reduction measures MUST be looked into such as those in place in Switzerland and Germany, where there are half exposed (i.e. one-sided) tunnels covered in grass/natural vegetation which blend in to be virtually indistinguishable, in a short time, from the natural landscape.

(3) Most residents would be likely to forgo pursuing financial compensation were these two measures to be properly addressed.

M. & J. Gray

23 June 2010

Muir and Jackie Gray
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Ref: 0110147 OBJ/149

Dear Muir and Jackie Gray

Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order Application

Thank you for your letter dated 12th February 2010 submitted to the Department for Transport, which objects to the Order application. You have responded using the standard tick sheet and we are responding accordingly.

The following paragraphs respond to the form that you completed and sent to the Department for Transport regarding The Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order, described below as the 'Scheme'.

The responses set out below are standard answers to the statements in the form that you have ticked, and that are reproduced in the bold italic typeface heading.

Individual concerns have not been properly addressed

Chiltern Railways has been committed to engaging local residents throughout the process of preparing the application for the Scheme. An extensive public consultation exercise has taken place including exhibitions, newsletters, infomails and a website. A hotline has been made available so that residents can contact a dedicated consultation team. The consultation team had detailed discussions on specific points with many residents who live close to the Scheme, before the application was submitted.

Since submission of the application to the Department for Transport in January 2010, there has been continued consultation with local residents. This included a meeting held for north Oxford residents on 25th March 2010. Chiltern Railways has and will continue to address specific concerns that residents raise.

Since the start of the consultation process, there has been an incremental and significant increase in numbers of trains, new passenger timetable (May 2009), trains on Sundays, more freight trains

Passenger timetables are reviewed twice yearly, so as to match train services with emerging market needs. The enhanced service introduced in May 2009, including Sunday trains, resulted from an agreement between First Great Western and Oxfordshire County Council. This is part of the County Council's wider policy of improving public transport services into Oxford. Chiltern Railways is not currently the operators of the Bicester to Oxford line, and was not involved in that agreement.

The number of freight trains on any railway line depends on contracts between the freight train companies and their customers, and on the demand for the goods being moved. There have been no new freight contracts affecting the Bicester to Oxford line agreed recently, but, there will be day-to-day variation in the number of trains, due, for example, to the changing demand for construction aggregates or military supplies. Chiltern Railways does not operate freight trains and will not be involved in the operation of freight trains on this line in future.

The current passenger and freight timetable including the most recent changes has been taken into account when describing the environmental impacts of the Scheme.

The new track will bring trains closer to my property which will increase noise and vibration

As part of the Scheme, the line from Oxford North Junction towards Bicester will be re-laid as double track. Although this effectively replaces a track which was taken up some years ago, the location of the nearest track will change compared to its current location. This is referred to as the "new" line in the paragraphs below, which describes the changes at the closest properties.

At the southern end of Ulfgar Road, the existing track is on east side of the trackbed, so the "new" line will be on the west side (i.e. the Ulfgar Road side). In this location the "new" track will be approximately 4 m nearer the boundary of the railway corridor, but this is only for a short distance affecting a few houses.

From Blenheim Drive/St Peters Road through Wolvercot tunnel to Carey Close, the existing single track is in the centre of the trackbed, so that when

this is replaced with double track, the "new" line will be no more than 2 m nearer the boundary of the railway corridor on either side.

From Linkside northwards, past Lakeside, the existing track is on the east side of the trackbed, i.e. the side nearest the houses. The "new" line will thus be on the west side, away from the houses, so the proximity of the nearest track to the Lakeside houses will not be changed.

Changes at other locations along the route are discussed in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES) where the Scheme is described.

Although the track is being re-laid closer to existing residential property in some cases, the noise from individual trains passing will only be slightly greater. The repositioning of the tracks is a smaller component of the change in train noise at most locations than the increase in the frequency of passenger and freight trains and changes in speed. All of the factors including the type of train that will be used have been taken into account in the noise assessment and mitigation strategy.

The noise assessments reported in the Environmental Statement have been carried out at the three locations, called receptors, which are closest to the tracks and are representative of those properties that are likely to be most affected by noise increases. The receptors used in North Oxford were numbers 14 (Lakeside), 15 (Wolvercote Primary School) and 16 (St Peters Road).

The predicted noise levels at these receptors, with and without the Scheme, are presented in the ES (Volume 2, Table 6.13 on page 6-35). These houses are already exposed to railway and road traffic noise, and this has been taken into account in the ES.

Since noise from the Scheme will affect people both in terms of how noticeable the noise changes are and how loud the noise is, noise has been assessed taking both of these factors into account. The factor that best describes the effect of the noise from the trains in the area being considered is used to determine the noise impact. In urban areas the change from existing ambient noise level tends to be the determinant of the effects of noise. In more rural areas, with very low ambient noise levels, how loud the noise is in isolation tends to be the determinant of the effect of noise on people. In these areas, the noise from the trains is compared to an absolute threshold level and the impact is assessed based on the amount by which the train noise is likely to exceed that level. All of these assessments are of noise levels measured outside rather than inside houses.

The ES describes noise levels both during Phase 1 of the Scheme when Chiltern Railways will operate a passenger service of up to 2 trains per hour

in each direction, and during Phase 2 which will only occur if and when the East West Rail proposal is built. The noise levels shown below relate to the worst case ie after Phase 2 of the Scheme.

The results of the noise predictions for receptors in North Oxford, reported in the ES, are reproduced below. For residential areas in this mainly urban area, the assessment has been based on the change in noise levels between the existing, or ambient, noise level and those noise levels that will occur after the Scheme is built.

For residential properties the largest noise impact, before mitigation such as noise barriers is provided, is expected to be at night. At receptor 14 (Lakeside), and receptor 16 (St Peters Road) an increase of 12 dB over current ambient noise levels has been predicted as the impact before mitigation. Mitigation has been considered in the ES, and a mitigation scheme based on the use of noise barriers is presented. The final choice of mitigation measures will be determined during detailed design, but it will ensure that noise levels are no higher than the noise levels with noise mitigation in place, as is set out in the ES.

The predictions suggest that barriers are likely to be required over a total length of over 1.5 km in this area to protect residential properties. The barrier has been designed to be 2 m high relative to the railway tracks. The resulting noise impacts are described in Volume 2, Table 6.2.3, on page 6-57 of the ES, and is summarised below for the receptors in this area:

Receptor 14 Lakeside

With the proposed barrier in place, a 2 dB residual noise increase is predicted, compared to 12 dB before mitigation at first floor level of the nearest houses in Lakeside where the barrier screening would be least effective. The residual noise change is expected to be less than 2 dB at ground floor level.

To explain what this means, the smallest change in noise level that is noticeable under normal listening conditions (ie not in a laboratory) is 3 dB. Therefore, the noise change at this property has been classed as a "slight" noise impact in the ES because it is not expected to have a noticeable effect even at first floor level outside these properties. The barrier will be more effective at ground floor level and no noticeable noise increase will occur.

Noise barriers and other mitigation will be installed during construction of the Scheme, wherever it is needed to mitigate the effects of Phase 1. Additional noise mitigation measures may be needed if Phase 2 of the Scheme, for the East West Rail project, is built. The effects predicted above are for Phase 2, and the effects in Phase 1 will be less than these predictions.

The levels of vibration that will arise from the new train service and track have been carefully assessed. These will be way below the levels which could cause any sort of damage to property. Even if, at present, you can feel or hear vibration or groundborne noise from trains, new track and ballast will be provided which will reduce vibration levels, even though it is accepted that there will be a greater frequency of trains passing.

Where it is predicted that vibration levels will increase, there are engineering methods, which may have to be used to "damp" vibration from the track. These will be used to ensure that, wherever practicable, everywhere along the railway, vibration felt inside residential properties is kept to below a very strict limit, which is defined in British Standard 6472 as a "low probability of adverse comment". In one or two locations, if full vibration mitigation is not practicable, the vibration levels will, at worst, be limited to "adverse comments possible" according to BS 6472, which is still a strict limit. Even at this level, no structural or cosmetic damage to property will occur.

Faster trains will increase noise and vibration

Although most of the Scheme consists of an existing operational railway, the Scheme will result in an increase in train speeds along the route resulting in increased noise as trains pass. While higher train speeds will increase the noise from individual trains, the noise mitigation, including over 1.5 km of noise barriers in North Oxford, will offset noise increases which result from increased train speeds.

Vibration from trains will be kept below a very strict limit. In some places, engineering measures will be needed, but there will be no risk of either cosmetic or structural damage to buildings.

Freight trains will be longer and carry larger loads which will increase noise and vibration

The maximum axleload for freight trains will, in future, be 25.5 tonnes, the same as it is now. This is normally only fully used by trains carrying bulk materials, such as gravel or crushed rock. Most other freight trains are much lighter; the typical axleload on a container train is around 17 to 18 tonnes. This is partly because consumer goods weigh much less and also because containers are transported by both road and rail, and their weight is constrained by the maximum overall weight allowed for lorries.

The Department for Transport is funding work to enable trains to carry the international standard 9'6" high containers through Wolvercot tunnel without

the need for special low-floor wagons (as against 9'0" high containers at present). This does not mean there will be any significant increase in axleloads, since, as noted above this is constrained by the maximum weight of containers that can be carried on lorries.

The length of freight trains varies according to market needs, e.g. the length of the trains carrying crushed rock is a result of the demand for building materials in the Oxford area, so upgrading the line will not in itself result in increased train lengths. Train lengths could increase for these reasons if the Scheme was not implemented. Trains of up to 650 metres length already use the line on occasions.

In Phase 1, it is very unlikely there will be any change in the number of freight trains on the line, as there will be no new freight terminals. However, if and when the East-West Rail (EWR) project is built, there may be more freight trains. These are most likely to be carrying shipping containers from Southampton. We have therefore included more freight trains in the evaluations for our Environmental Statement, so that this reflects the "worst case".

Freight trains are much more environmentally sustainable than road haulage as they use far less fuel per tonne of freight moved, and moving freight off the roads greatly reduces road damage and congestion. Modern freight trains on modern track are also very much quieter than those of even a few years ago.

Trains can be heard above the background noise in my house, such as the television, boiler, fridge, etc., even when the windows are closed. The noise and vibration from passing trains is overwhelming in the garden and in my house if the windows are open. With many more trains, living in adjacent properties to the railway line will become intolerable, our neighbourhood will be destroyed by both the exodus of those people that can afford to move and by a fall in quality of the area. This will inevitably impact on the value of my house making moving to a similarly pleasant location (as now) within Oxford much more difficult.

Whilst train speed will increase the noise from individual trains, the noise mitigation, including over 1.5 km of noise barriers in North Oxford, is likely to offset increases in speed. However, the number of trains will increase.

Chiltern Railways is proposing noise mitigation which will apply to noise levels much lower than the statutory limits set out in the Noise insulation Regulations.

The ES sets out, in a form which will be legally binding on Chiltern Railways, the noise levels above which mitigation will be applied. The preferred option for noise mitigation is one that contains noise at source, such as maintaining the rails and wheels and considering infrastructure solutions to the track bed which reduce noise. Where these are not possible, measures such as noise barriers will be considered. These interrupt the path of the noise between the rails and the windows of the nearest properties. All of these measures will provide benefits in terms of reducing noise both inside and outside the properties.

Chiltern Railways is proposing noise mitigation in the form of barriers for all locations where there are noise impacts, without mitigation, of at least 5 to 7 dB. In areas such as North Oxford noise changes determine the size of the noise impact. In more rural areas away from major road noise sources, the amount by which the train noise exceeds a daytime threshold of 55 dB or the night-time threshold of 45 dB is the best way of assessing the noise impact. If impacts of more than 10 dB are likely to be experienced at residential properties, Chiltern Railways will consider installing noise insulation. Wherever possible, other forms of mitigation, such as barriers, will be preferred.

The actual location of properties which will be offered noise insulation will be determined during the detailed design stage and work is ongoing to refine mitigation, but the ES makes clear the standards that are to be achieved in Volume 2, section 6.5.2 on page 6-47.

As transport by rail increases, the numbers of passengers and freight trains will continue to increase incrementally once the scheme is complete leading to further increases in noise and vibration

Different frequencies of service have been assessed under Phases 1 and 2 of the Scheme. These frequencies take account of any likely future increase in service frequencies that may occur.

The frequency of trains using the line will be limited by the capacity of the track layout and signalling system, and the need to offer a robust and reliable service. The assessments of noise and vibration have been based on forecast numbers of all passenger and freight trains in the future, not just those on Chiltern Railways' services. These forecast numbers of services are almost at the maximum capacity of the double track line with the signalling arrangements that are proposed.

Pollution levels in the immediate vicinity already exceed EU statutory guidelines, and these will be further exacerbated

Modelling of the dispersion of emissions from rail and road traffic movements associated with Phase 2 of the Scheme (ie with more frequent train movements than in Phase 1) has indicated that pollutant concentrations at residential properties closest to the railway line will not cause significant air quality impacts. The total pollutant concentrations, including those from trains using the Scheme are likely to be within EU statutory guidelines, as implemented in UK law.

The Scheme is generally a positive development for improving air quality, as it provides a sustainable alternative to the car, particularly for commuting journeys into Oxford from surrounding areas.

In addition the standard objection included a section that urges Chiltern Railways and/or Network Rail to:

Ensure that everything possible is done to reduce the impact of the increased train service, such as:

- *installation of fully-effective noise and vibration barriers next to the track as a matter of urgency concurrent with the work;*

Chiltern Railways, in association with Network Rail, is doing everything that can reasonably be done to reduce the environmental impacts of the increased services after the Scheme is built. This includes the installation of effective noise and vibration mitigation, including noise barriers and insulation, where necessary. Those required to deal with noise from Phase 1 will be installed before any additional train services start running. If Phase 2, for the East West Rail project, is built, additional mitigation measures will be installed, where required.

- *install track infrastructure designed to reduce noise and vibration including welded track, rail dampers, etc; and*

Continuously welded track will be installed. A range of additional mitigation measures including rail dampers will be considered to mitigate impacts where these have been identified. The extent and type of mitigation at individual locations will be determined as part of the detailed design which will be

developed following the approval of the Order. However, the ES identifies the noise and vibration limits for which mitigation will be provided.

- *use only well maintained rolling stock fitted with noise and vibration mitigating devices including wheel dampers, etc.*

Chiltern Railways operates modern trains and undertakes regular inspection and maintenance including regular wheel maintenance at its own facility to correct any wheel flats or other defects that may increase operational noise. Wheel dampers are not normally fitted to trains and would only have a marginal effect under most conditions, and are not proposed for this Scheme.

- *use trains that retain sanitary waste for off-track disposal, and*

All trains built since about 1990 have toilet retention tanks and do not discharge onto the track. Any Chiltern Railways trains in regular service on the Bicester to Oxford line will have retention tanks.

- *review all noise and vibration mitigating measures every six months and repair or upgrade as necessary.*

Noise will be minimised by ensuring a high standard of maintenance during the operating life of the railway to avoid noise levels increasing unnecessarily due to wear and tear of the wheel and rail surfaces. The track and any noise barriers will be maintained by Network Rail. Furthermore, Chiltern Railways undertakes regular train inspection and wheel maintenance to correct any wheel flats or other defects that may increase operational noise. The frequency of these inspections will be commensurate with the upgraded railway.

Baseline mitigation on the number of passenger and (longer, heavier) freight trains projected to operate after completion of EastWest Rail and then no subsequent incremental increases in train traffic allowed without full consultation with residents.

The ES has assessed the likely future numbers and types of train, including the expected increase as a result of the EastWest Rail proposed level of services and has suggested appropriate mitigation measures for this, which will be implemented if Phase 2 of the Scheme, which is needed for East West Rail, goes ahead. The forecast numbers and types of trains used for the

assessment of Phase 2 are almost at the maximum that could use the railway with the double track and signalling arrangements which are proposed. Mitigation is designed in the first instance for Phase 1, with a requirement that the Phase 2 mitigation is done before the Phase 2 works are brought into use.

Provide funding to equip my house with the highest quality glazing and to undertake any repairs to my house caused by vibration.

It is very unlikely that vibrations from the operation of the trains will cause any form of structural damage. In the unlikely event that it does, owners will be able to claim for compensation under the Compulsory Purchase Compensation Code. More detail on this can be found in the booklet on compensation produced by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which can be found on line at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/compulsorypurchase4>

Noise insulation, usually secondary or double glazing, will be provided at a small number of properties that qualify under the Noise Insulation Regulations. The properties at which this is likely to be the case are outlined in the ES in Volume 2, Table 6.14, Page 6-38. There are a few other properties, which do not qualify under the Regulations, where Chiltern Railways believes that noise insulation should be offered. These are discussed in Volume 2 of the ES at page 6-54 and 6-59.

Maintain and enforce the present speed restriction (40mph) on all trains along the sections of the track adjoining residential areas.

The predicted increased noise levels resulting from all causes will be mitigated as set out in the ES. Speed restrictions will apply to various sections of the line for safety reasons, but restricting speeds to 40 mph, for example, from Oxford station to the edge of the built up area, would not be practicable. Timetable predictions show that reducing speed from those proposed for the Scheme would make reliable operation impractical and would not meet the aims of the project, which are to provide reliable and fast rail services between Oxford, Bicester and London. At lower speeds it would be impossible to operate a viable timetable that avoids congestion on the single track section of the route from Oxford station to Oxford North Junction and fits with the required timetable train paths onwards to Bicester and London.

No trains during the night from 00:00 until 05:00

Chiltern Railways will not be running passenger trains through the night, and services in late evening and early morning will be at a reduced frequency. A very small number of trains (perhaps 1 or 2) may arrive in Oxford after midnight or depart from Oxford before 0600.

Any overall increase in freight train numbers above those currently operated is only likely if and when the East-West Rail project goes ahead. The number of freight movements will reflect national freight demand, and will be limited by the number of available freight paths (1 per hour in each direction) and the likely market demand. Based on analysis of the number of the existing situation on the main line through Oxford, only about half of the available freight paths are likely to be used limiting the number to perhaps five freight train movements between midnight and 0500 hours, and perhaps 8 train movements between 2300 to 0700 hours.

Electrify the line as soon as practically possible

Electrification is an issue for consideration by Network Rail and the Department for Transport as it must be considered on a network wide basis. There are no proposals at present to electrify the line. However, all new and rebuilt structures on the line (bridges, tunnels, etc) will be constructed with sufficient clearances to enable electrification in future.

These responses deal with the general concerns raised on the standard form you submitted. We hope that these answers deal with your concerns. Chiltern Railways will be continuing to work with local residents to address individual concerns and if you have a particular issue that has not been addressed please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Charlene Baker
Consultant
ERM

on behalf of the Chiltern Railway Company Ltd

29 July 2010

Muir and Jackie Gray
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OX2 8JQ

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Dear Muir and Jackie Gray,

**Draft Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford improvements) Order
Objection number 149– Muir and Jackie Gray**

I am writing further to the letter we sent to you on 24.06.2010 in response to your letter of objection, which was sent to the Department For Transport. We have not received any response to the letter we sent to you, I trust we have addressed all of your concerns.

If you do have any further questions in relation to the proposed Order or if we have not successfully addressed your concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me on charlene.baker@erm.com. If you feel that we have addressed your concerns with the above Order then you are able to withdraw your objection by writing to the Secretary of State for Transport. Ideally Chiltern will have no objections remaining at the Public Inquiry, we welcome the opportunity to work with you to achieve this position.

Yours faithfully,

Charlene Baker
Consultant
ERM

On behalf of Chiltern Railways

18 October 2010

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Your ref: OBJ/149

Dear Muir and Jackie Gray

Proposed Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) TWA Order

I write to you as an objector to the Chiltern Railways TWA Order. Specifically, you have raised concern about the effect of noise and/or vibration of the proposed Scheme and its impact on your property.

Chiltern Railways is committed to using the Best Practicable Means to design the railway so as to avoid significant noise and vibration impacts. Enclosed is the *Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) TWA Order Draft Noise and Vibration Mitigation Policy (October 2010)*, which sets out Chiltern Railways' commitment to control noise and vibration impacts in detail. This document will be finalised following consideration of improvements that are identified during the Inquiry.

We hope that this policy, which will be legally enforced by planning condition, will satisfy your concerns regarding noise and vibration, and that you will be able to remove your objection to the Scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Gilder
Head of Planning

For and on behalf of the Chiltern Railway Company Ltd