

OBJ/117-118/1

**THE CHILTERN RAILWAYS (BICESTER TO OXFORD IMPROVEMENTS) ORDER
201[X]- ("THE ORDER")**

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

OF

Mrs Adriana M Pia Farr of Chipping Farmhouse, Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, OX5 2TH;

Mr Peter Farr of Chipping Farmhouse, Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, OX5 2TH;

Mr Luciano Howard of Chipping Farm, Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, OX5 2TH; and

Mrs Christine Howard of Chipping Farm, Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, OX5 2TH.

DOCUMENT REFERENCE – OBJ/118/1

Introduction

1. We have lived at Chipping Farm since 1993. Chipping Farm is in a tranquil surrounding where we have enjoyed the peaceful seclusion in a beautiful and rural setting which has enhanced all of our lives. It is accessed by a private track that we share the maintenance and use of with the freeholders of the land, the Church Commissioners. We have been able to upkeep the track as well as possible given all the natural environmental problems because the usage has up until now been minimal. We feel that the new railway will inevitably result in unacceptable noise levels but perhaps more importantly we are concerned about the extra usage of the track. We fear that our properties will be significantly devalued by Chiltern's proposals.

Our evidence

2. We understand that Chiltern are resisting any improvement of the Chipping Farm track as they argue this would constitute a betterment whereas they only need to provide something which is functionally equivalent. One of our arguments against this is that they are not comparing like with like.
3. The survey has been carried out on the track at a time of extremely favourable weather conditions with no knowledge of how wet and potholed the track becomes in the Autumn, Winter and Spring months without adequate maintenance.
4. The material we have used in the past to upkeep the track would not be adequate for the increased traffic as the track would deteriorate much quicker and consequently the upkeep will increase disproportionately with the increased usage. A more robust surface is needed to contend with the extra traffic. Again we would like to say that this situation has been forced upon us and we have a real concern about the cost of the maintenance of the track with this extra usage.
5. We have grave concerns at the structure of the drainage stream which is need of repair and of the flooding on the corner of the only real passing place on the track which will also be inadequate due to the increased traffic.
6. Also, if this order is passed the amount of decimation to Chipping Farm Track would be enormous in providing a track from Brook Furlong, with large heavy Lorries involved in the construction of a new piece of track.
7. If the Steve and Anita Unwin (Brook Furlong) and John Henman (Manor Farm) acquire the right of way over Chipping track to reach their respective properties, the use of Chipping Farm track will be so much greater than present use of Chipping track as it will then be used by greater number of parties:

- (1) Ourselves, the owners of Chipping Farmhouse (the FARRS),
 - (2) The owners of Chipping Farm (the Howards),
 - (3) The Church Commissioners and their tenants,
 - (4) The owners of Brook Furlong and surrounding land (The Unwins),
 - (5) (John Henman),
 - (6) Guests to all 3 properties
 - (7) postal and delivery vehicles
 - (8) Utility lorries (e.g. oil)
8. We also believe that there may be at least one other party (the Calcutts?) who have right of way over a short part of the track nearest the Bletchington Road for access to a field not owned by the Church Commissioners.
9. We have objected on these grounds but have had no binding commitments to limit the use of the track even to the new users listed above, nor to avoid the use of the track by vehicles being used to build the railway.

Our proposals

10. **That Chiltern provide us with a permanent surface for the existing Chipping Farm Track and for the proposed new track from Brook Furlong to the spur at Chipping Farm.**
11. **That use of the track be limited to the existing users together with the Unwins and Mr Henman; and that construction vehicles be prevented from using it.**

Conclusion and submissions

12. The impact on living at Chipping Farm will be enormous if we were unable to use the track as we have for the past 20 years, which will also have a huge effect on the resale value of both of our properties. We have all worked hard to improve our properties in this rural and beautiful setting and would be devastated at the thought of having to move because the problem of accessibility.
13. We are strongly of the opinion that until a realistic solution can be found to the situation with Chipping Farm track it will not be possible to agree to the proposals made by Chiltern Railways