

031/14

Keith Dancey

Ref: PETOM/

Chairman, Quadrangle Management Limited

119788-010009

15 Quadrangle House,
St Peters Road,
Upper Wolvercote,
Oxford

OX2 8BN

Tel: 01865 557409

July 26th 2010

Statement of Case

Re: The Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order
(otherwise known as the Evergreen 3 Proposals).

To Whom It May Concern,

please accept my Letter of Objection (enclosed) as my Statement of Case, with the following *additional* points.

I do appreciate that Chiltern Railways are attempting to meet our fears about this development, and for that I am genuinely thankful.

In a letter from Environmental Resources Management (ERM) of North Hinksey Lane, Oxford (too long to copy), under the heading **Vibration**, they say that Chiltern Railways have checked with Network Rail if they have records of any complaint of damage caused by vibration from trains, as this has been stated by a number of objectors. They could find no such claims, even going back to BR days. They ask for any evidence we may have.

I am afraid all such correspondence, as may have existed, has long been discarded. This happened 40 years ago. Quadrangle House was a Housing Association development (under the auspices of the then Housing Corporation and Nationwide Building Society) managed by Housing Association Management, of 43 Denison House, 296 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1.

Housing Association Management was a member of the Omnium Housing Group, of Cardigan House, 53 Deptford Broadway, London SE8 4PH.

These organisations has long since ceased to exist, and no documents from Housing Association Management or Omnium have survived, as far as I know. We know this because we have tried to establish through Solicitors, the local Council, the Land Registry, Companies House and the Treasury Solicitor, the chronological process of land acquisition and ownership of various parts of the development after a boundary discrepancy (not involving the railway!) was discovered. No documents of any type were found.

Since then, Quadrangle House has been managed by Michael Smith Housing Association Management, Andrews Letting And Management Limited and, now, Covenant Management of Carterton, Oxon.

It should be noted that we have always been a "self-management" association - these organisations were employed to keep books, collect monies etc. The Chairmen of the time have passed away. I moved in around 1973, and became Chairman around 15 years ago.

I do know from my early memories that structural problems and vibration were associated with the operation of heavy freight.

The very earliest set of Quadrangle Housing Society Limited minutes which I still possess date from 12th March 1975, and in this the Chariman's Report, item (e) is headed Trains vibration. "An approach to be made to British Rail concerning vibration from fast heavy trains and perhaps get a speed reduction".

Following that, Minutes of the meeting held on 16th October, 1975, under the heading Railway Nuisance state "The Chairman informed the meeting that a new continuous welded track had been laid, and it was hoped that this would reduce railway noise and vibration".

The line was changed from dual track to single track (centered), with continuous welded rails on a new, deep(er) bed.

However, it was not until Amey Roadstone stopped their heavy stone trains that we stopped getting excessive, and, quite frankly, worrying levels of vibration.

I do not possess copies of any further sets of Minutes until April 1977, and the specific issue of building vibration is not mentioned.

However, Chiltern Railways, in their *evergreen3*, issue 4, spring 2010 publication, state that damage due to vibration from trains is virtually unknown. Yet almost all the line-side properties in Wolvercote with which I am familiar have structural

cracking. Our own structural damage is still visible for anyone to inspect, even though we have repaired a good deal of it. Any visual inspection of First Turn bridge reveals significant structural damage, something which will require considerable re-building before this project can proceed safely.

We are anxious that this proposal does not increase vibrations beyond current levels.

Under the heading **Freight**, ERM say it is impossible to limit the speed of passenger trains *through Wolvercote* to 50 mph, but provide no evidence why this is so. They refer to "timetable predictions showing that reduced speeds would make reliable operation impractical", but do not demonstrate why. They show no evidence. They also state that the attractiveness of the service requires the journey time to be minimal. However, a service already runs at the current operational passenger speeds of 30 mph (!) *through Wolvercote*, so requesting the new maximum speed to be 50 mph, for such a very short distance, represents a considerable improvement.

In their table of Class 168 train speeds, they propose to attain a speed of 50 mph at Castle Mill Stream bridge, with most (all!) trains stopping at Water Eaton Parkway station. Therefore, over a distance barely longer than 2 miles, taking into account the deceleration distance required to bring a train to a standstill at Water Eaton, a passenger train allowed to accelerate to 75 mph through Wolvercote will gain *considerably less than one minute* in journey time over our proposed speed limit.

I do not know the acceleration rates achievable by Class 168/165 trains, in all weather conditions, to provide exact timings, but to deny that a service would only be "attractive to passengers" or that a timetable would be impossible - involving 4 trains per hour each way - for a mere handful of seconds, does not appear either reasonable or credible to me.

In my letter to the Oxford Mail, and my Letter of Objection, I suggested that regular rail commuters to and from Bicester would not begrudge 2 minutes of their day, when they would be about to save twenty-four minutes anyway (according to timings from *evergreen3*, issue 4, spring 2010) or twenty minutes (according to timings from Oxford Mail report)?

All the problems associated with noise disturbance, emissions and increased vibration would be greatly alleviated by keeping this regular passenger service to a **local** speed limit of 50 mph *through Wolvercote*.

Considering that this is locally 20 mph faster than the service currently allowed/operated, I think we are being extremely fair.

(Just imagine what it will be like for us, if trains were allowed to rush past at 75 mph a few feet from our bedrooms!)

Under the heading **Noise**, ERM offer no explicit mitigation.

Most of us already have double glazing, but in mild weather windows are usually open.

ERM also write "In your letter you have also highlight (*sic*) your preference to keep the trees and shrubs in your garden". I wrote no such thing. We do not have a garden between our building and the railway line.

Under the heading **Commitment to Mitigation**, ERM write that noise barriers will be considered. Taken in conjunction with their previous statement about gardens, it seems clear that ERM have a poor idea about the structure and placement of Quadrangle House: any noise barrier would have to be approximately twenty feet tall, because Quadrangle House is three stories high, with no living accommodation at ground level.

(A barrier twenty feet high, less than ten feet from our bedroom windows would not be acceptable to me.)

They also say that continuously welded track would be installed, but that is no different, as far as I know, to what already exists. Other mitigations such as rail dampers, which are mentioned, are left unexplained.

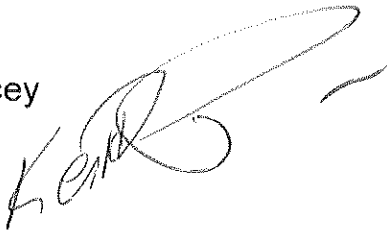
We have been supplied with no detailed evidence/explanation of how the track bed or rail-head can be improved - over what is already installed - regarding either noise or vibration, other than statements that it could be.

I would like to know in detail how the track bed and rail-head will be improved, and how any such rail dampers work.

Finally, what will happen to the Badgers, Muntjac, Roe Deer and Foxes who cross the line where we live, sometimes to sleep under my window? What will happen to the small Elder and Hawthorne trees outside my bedroom window, which are used by all the birds who visit my feeders? Can they be saved?

Yours sincerely,

Keith Dancey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Dancey', written in a cursive style.

Enclosures:

emailed Letter of Objection from myself.

Quadrangle Housing Society Limited Minutes of AGM on 12th March 1975.

Quadrangle Co-ownership Housing Society Ltd Minutes of AGM 16th October 1975.





Keith Dancey <kgdancey@googlemail.com>

Chiltern Railways' "Evergreen 3" proposals

Keith Dancey <kgdancey@googlemail.com>

Thu, Feb 4, 2010 at 6:26 PM

To: transportandworksact@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Keith Dancey
15 Quadrangle House,
St Peters Road,
Upper Wolvercote,
Oxford
OX2 8BN

Tel: (01865) 557409



To:

The Secretary of State for Transport
c/o The Transport and Works Act Orders Unit
Department for Transport,
Zone 1/31
Great Minster House,
76 Marsham Street,
London
SW19 4DR

Re: The Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order
(otherwise known as the Evergreen 3 Proposals).

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. Who we are.

I am writing as a land and property owner adversely affected by these proposals, and wish to object, both as an individual Leaseholder living at 15 Quadrangle House, St Peters Road, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford, and as a Director and Chairman of Quadrangle Management Limited.

Quadrangle Management Limited is a private, self-governing, non-profit-making Company, and owner of the Freehold of Quadrangle House.

Quadrangle House is a non-monolithic, inter-connected block, up to three stories high, of 16 self-contained flats, 7 of which are currently let. Therefore, there are 23 families adversely affected by these proposals, but that number can vary.

2. Where we are.

Quadrangle House - and my particular flat - is situated about ten metres from the current position of the nearest rail of the Oxford - Bicester line. It directly borders Network Rail land and is the nearest property to this railway line. It is impossible to get any closer.

We are two hundred yards south of First Turn Bridge in Upper Wolvercote, and about a quarter of a mile south of Wolvercote Tunnel.

3.1 Why we object.

The main problem we face is from excessive and dangerous vibration from heavy freight. This is, principally, the result of two factors: speed of locomotion and axle weight, from passing trains.

Axle weight provides compression to the immediate sub-soil beneath the track bed, and the compression waves generated by this moving mass travel at the speed of locomotion. The duration of the vibration, obviously, is dependent upon the length of the train.

It is no different, in practice, to small earthquakes.

The resulting vertical movements of the building are proportional to the compression, and are uniform if measured anywhere in the vertical plane, whereas horizontal movements are provided by the impulse from the compression wave, and can be magnified by building height. Resonance may be set up and can cause excessive structural failure.

Resonance is dependent upon the frequency of the compression waves and the height of the building. The frequency of the compression waves, in turn, is dependent upon the length of the wheel base, and the speed of locomotion.

3.2 How Quadrangle House has already been Damaged.

As you no doubt know, any packed, particulate matter (the sub-soil), if subjected to sufficient vibration, will begin to act like a liquid. Liquids support structures differently to packed, particulate matter.

The effect vibration from passing heavy trains has had on Quadrangle House was to cause differential, and excessive, subsidence.

For some period of years in the 1970's, very heavy Amey Roadstone trains - whose total weight was in the region of 3000 tonnes - caused significant structural damage to our property.

The differential subsidence of the part of the building nearest the line, compared to the part of the building furthest away from the line, caused its "backbone" to break and the building to shift slightly on its foundations.

This led to:

movement of the roof structure,

vertical and "staircase" cracking to supporting brick walls,
cracking throughout horizontal concrete slabs at second floor level,
cracking throughout the first floor concrete patio slab, thereby
breaching its waterproof membrane,
cracking to supporting brick piers,
and misalignment of door and window frames.

Over the years, we have spent in excess of £100,000 repairing this damage, and the work is not complete. About 90% of that cost was over-and-above our normal service charges, and is not normalised to today's prices!

All the line-side properties I have visited in the area have suffered similar structural damage, in proportion to their distance from the track. Public structures such as First Turn Bridge display similar structural damage (and in my opinion will require significant strengthening in order to avoid complete collapse under these proposals).

I believe the line speed during the 1970's was 40 MPH. There were no passenger trains, and the track had been centered and replaced with concrete sleepers and long rails. I do not have figures for the axle weights in operation at that time.

Once the heavy Amey Roadstone trains ceased operation we suffered no further structural deterioration (that is an important point) although we do suffer vibration.

4. What is being Proposed.

Chiltern Railways have written to me reporting that the current line speed in our vicinity is 30 MPH. At these speeds, existing passenger trains cause no nuisance whatsoever, and existing freight trains vibrate the building but appear not to cause any further damage.

Chiltern Railways' proposals include moving the line nearer to our building, to within ten metres of our property (thereby increasing the degree of vibration), increasing the line speed (also increasing the degree of vibration) and increasing the frequency and length of trains (increasing both the duration and the number of periods of vibration).

Chiltern Railways first wrote to me saying that the speed of freight trains will be increased to 60 MPH, and that passenger trains will be increased to 75 MPH, in the vicinity of Quadrangle House.

I am afraid that without significant mitigation, the safety of the structure of our property - and therefore of its occupants - is at serious risk!

Chiltern Railways have since written to me to say that the line speed for freight trains will remain at 30 MPH.

5. Our Response.

This railway branch line was not built as an Oxford - London, high-speed main line, and it was not built as part of an east - west cross-country freight route.

In the future it is possible that passenger trains will increase the number of carriages, that freight containers will increase in size, and that the maximum axle-loading will increase. Perhaps the line speeds will be increased? It is inevitable that the number of both passenger and freight trains will increase. It is also possible that this increase will extend to nighttime operations.

5.1 Line Speed and Vibration.

I have asked, and am asking here, for the line speed for freight to be limited to 30 MPH, and for the line speed for passenger trains to be limited to 50 MPH, between the Oxford North Junction and Wolvercote tunnel (or possibly Water Eaton Parkway) for each type of train. That is not a great distance.

I am asking that those be the statutory line speeds set and maintained by Network Rail, since I believe Chiltern Railways are not the regulatory authority, and may, indeed, not remain the operator for evermore. I am asking for these to be conditions on any Planning Consent. That is an important point because we need assurance, for our own safety, that they cannot be overridden, without consultation, sometime in the future.

Such a regulatory line speed restriction (through a residential area) will have no effect on current freight journey times (since that is what we are told already pertains by practice), and would reduce the current passenger journey times to Bicester by 10 minutes, all other proposed speed limits pertaining.

Chiltern's proposed line speeds would reduce passenger journey times by another 2 minutes only.

Setting such line speed limits as I have proposed is the easily the simplest and zero-cost(!) solution to keeping vibration at Quadrangle House - and other line-side properties - to acceptable, non-damaging, levels.

5.2 Line Speed and Noise.

We are also going to be adversely affected by greatly increased noise disturbance if these proposals are allowed through unamended. Reducing the line speeds as per my proposals would also be the most effective and cheapest method in keeping this increase to a minimum.

A sound-barrier (solid acoustic fence) is not really acceptable to me - or practical - considering our situation. Bedrooms at Quadrangle House, mine included, are the nearest parts of the property to the line. However, there is no living accommodation at the ground floor level in the part of the property nearest the line: living accommodation is on the first and second floors. An acoustic fence would need to be between fifteen and twenty feet high to be effective at first and second floor level, and would then block out the light.

(I suggest planting a line of small trees/shrubs close to our property would help, if imperfectly, in this respect. A mixture of small

varieties of elder, hawthorn and holly, planted two meters from our wall. I could supply suitable variety names. There is currently, a small elder and even smaller hawthorn outside my flat which I am anxious to keep: they are important for the birds which use my feeders outside my bedroom window. British Rail, Railtrack and Network Rail have all agreed, over the years, to keep these small trees. This feeding station has figured in the RSPB's Great Garden Birdwatch for more than 15 years.)

5.3 Line Speed and Emissions.

These proposals will undoubtedly increase emissions in our vicinity, noxious and otherwise. We are likely to suffer because Quadrangle House is not only so near but provides a sheltered position. Reducing the line speeds to my proposals would also be the most effective method of reducing these locally (unless you were to electrify the line).

5.4 Additional Mitigation.

Considering axle weight limits may be increased in future (and probably done without further consultation), and that these proposals will inevitably lead to increased usage and disturbance, I would also ask that the section of track opposite Quadrangle House be fitted with whatever devices and resilient track forms are available to reduce vibration to acceptable, non-damaging, levels.

This would involve, I think, only a small cost to the project, but it would help protect us from future damage.

5.5 Measurements and Continuing Monitoring.

I am asking that current maximum levels of vibration at Quadrangle House be measured, and for a satisfactory period after any implementation of this scheme. I think this is essential where the safety of people and property is concerned. How else are we going to know whether vibration has been mitigated?

It is also essential that future developments in freight traffic, such as increased axle-loading, increased total train weights and increased traffic - made possible by this new development linking lines and enlarging tunnels and bridges - be monitored for changes in vibration at Quadrangle House.

We do need these commitments.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Dancey

Director and Chairman, Quadrangle Management Limited.

08/14

QUADRANGLE HOUSING SOCIETY LIMITED

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Wednesday 12th March 1975 at Flat 1, Quadrangle House, St. Peter's Road, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford.

MEMBERS PRESENT (Members' flat number in brackets)

Mr. A.F. Hyde	(14)	Mr. G. Drew	(6)
Miss A. de Marais	(13)	Mrs. G. Timms	(5)
Miss A. Paling	(12)	Mr. D. Steele	(4)
Mr. R. Hodgkinson	(11)	Mr M. Griffin	(3)
Mr. A. Hodgkins	(10) - Chairman	Mr. D. Hunter	(2)
Mr. M. Hobday	(9)	Mr. N. Grimwade	(1)
Mrs. J. Moore	(8)		

ATTENDING

Mr. R. Pride. Omnium Housing Association Limited.

Apology for absence had been received from Mr. D.A. Lawson and Mr. B. Phillips (7).

BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported on the affairs of the Society in the 11 months since the last A.G.M.

- (a) Generally, the Society has progressed in its self management and had achieved a number of improvements. Relations with the Management Company had become closer and more effective particularly as a result of the reorganisation and new management team within the Company. Mr. Pride informed the meeting that two more estates officers had been appointed which would improve contact with Societies and allow more thorough visits.
- (b) Maintenance and repairs. The external painting was being carried out on the majority of the building omitting inessential work to reduce cost. Members' cooperation will be needed in the next few weeks to allow painters' access to windows and doors. Keys are to be left with Flat 10.

Problems of damp and rainwater are being attended to by degrees but there are difficulties in getting jobbing builders to do the work.

The cracks in the structure, particularly the car park brick piers have been inspected twice by structural engineers and the view is that the cracking was an initial once-for-all movement that is not worsening.

- (c) Capital Values. The final construction cost of the whole block has now been settled at a figure lower than that anticipated on which the capital values had originally been based. There is therefore to be reduction of 12½% on existing valuations and the new valuations for re-lets. Recent changes in the option Mortgage rate also affects the rate of interest to be paid through the 'rents'. These changes and their likely benefits as set out by Omnium Housing Association Ltd in a letter to the Chairman, are to be examined by the Committee and all members will be informed.

Contd./...

- (d) Gas heater Insurance. A proposal from the Management company for adopting a collective insurance covering repair maintenance etc of all gas-fired heater units in the block has been accepted by the Committee as having clear financial advantage over any individual members' arrangements, (if such exist).
- (e) Trains vibration. An approach to be made to British Rail concerning vibration from fast heavy trains and perhaps get a speed reduction. It was also hoped to find out more about possible re-opening of passenger traffic on the line in view of its consequent effect.
- (f) GPO Telephones. Re-arrangement of telephone cabling from overhead wires to ducted cables had now been carried out by the GPO. The society had agreed to the GPO's request for wayleave through the property for the re-arrangement and it was suggested and agreed that the Committee might now try to get some dispensation from having to continue to share party lines.
- (g) NCCHS Conference. Housing Societies have formed an association, to be known as the National Council of Co-Ownership Housing Societies, to represent their interests and collectively tackle the problems that many societies share. Nigel Grimwade and Jenny Smith attended the November Conference and a brief report was given.

The full conference report and a letter from the Steering Group Chairman is available for any member interested (Flats 1 & 4)

The new association needs funds to get started and their suggested rate of £2 per unit giving a sum of £32 to be sent by Quadrangle Housing Society was agreed.

Mr. Pride strongly supported the Association and its aims, emphasising the vital role it will now play as a result of recent changes in housing legislation and the functions of the Housing Corporation, together with the effect of inflation on Co-ownership finance.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman for all his hard work was proposed by Derek Hunter and carried unanimously.

2. The Audited Income and Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet made up to 31st March 1974, which had been agreed by the Committee, were adopted by the Meeting.

The re-appointment of the Auditors Messrs Longcrofts was agreed for the current years' accounts to 31st March 1975.

3. The meeting then proceeded with the election of the Committee

The two retiring members were Mr. Michael Hobday(9) who was nominated for re-election and Miss Ann Paling (12) who did not wish to be re-elected. Other nominations were : Mrs ~~de Mowans~~ (13), Mr ~~Graffin~~ (3), Mr. Ronald Hodgkinson (11)

4. Mr. Pride acted as scrutineer and teller. As the result, Mr. M. Hobday and Mr. R. Hodgkinson were elected.

The Committee of Management is therefore as follows :

Alan Hyde (14)

Jackie Moore (8)

Contd./...

Ronald Hodgkinson	(11)	Jennie Steele	⁴ (9)
Adrian Hodgkins	(10)	Derek Hunter	(2)
Michael Hobday	(9)	Nigel Grimwade	(1)

At the subsequent Committee Meeting, Mr. Nigel Grimwade was elected Chairman.

4. The thanks of the Society were extended to Mr. Pride and the Omnium Housing Association for their services. There being no other business, the meeting closed at approximately 9.00 pm.

06/1/76

Quadrangle Co-ownership Housing Society Ltd.

Minutes of the A.G.M. held at Flat 13, Quadrangle House, Oxford. 7pm. 16th October, 1975.

Present

N. Grimwade (1), B. Phillips (7), G. Drew (6), R. Hodgkinson (11), D. Steel (4), M. Griffin (3), S. Griffin (3), A. Hodgkins (10), A. Hyde (14), S. Crisp (14), H. Hobday (9), S. Collins (15), R. Pierce (Omnium Housing Assoc. Ltd.)

Agenda

Members

Four units have been vacated; A. Paling (12), A. de Marais (13), D. and L. Hunter (2), J. and J. Coleman (8), and A. and C. Hodgkins were reported to be leaving in the near future.

Janet Cobb has moved into Flat 2, and Kevin Moore has returned to Flat 8.

Capital Values

The Chairman stated that the 12½% reduction in Capital Value reported at the previous A.G.M. would not result in any decrease in rental charges, due to the necessity to increase the Society's reserve funds.

Railway Nuisance

The Chairman informed the meeting that a new continuous welded track had been laid, and it was hoped that this would reduce railway noise and vibration.

Gas Heaters

The Gas Board offer no reduction for collective inspection, maintenance and servicing.

N.H.C.C.S.

This society now has an office, and has provided some literature which has been circulated to committee members. The meeting agreed to continue our financial aid to this society, at the rate of £2 per occupied unit.

Maintenance and Repairs

The Chairman reported that the external painting had been completed satisfactorily, but that there was a problem in obtaining builders to agree

to do other essential jobs. Each flat has been circulated with a form, on which items needing repair were listed, with an assessment of the urgency of each repair.

In this way it is hoped that a complete list of faults can be compiled, and programmed action on their repair undertaken.

Accounts

The accounts for 1974/5 were approved. The meeting also agreed to retain Longcrofts as auditors for 1975/6, but asked that they produce a laymans guide to the accounts for future years.

Tidiness.

The Chairman made a general appeal to all members for improved tidiness, particularly with regard to leaving dustbins out longer than is necessary, and also with regard to cat excreta.

Committee

N. Grimwade, J. Steel and A. Hodgkins retired. D. Steel, M. Griffin, K. Moore and B. Phillips were elected to join the existing committee members, M. Hobday, R. Hodgkinson and A. Hyde.

The meeting expressed its thanks to the retiring Chairman, N. Grimwade, for the work which he has put into the Society.

Signed

Chairman.