

The Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

The Chiltern Railway Company Limited

January 2010



Chiltern Railways

PROJECT
EVERGREEN 3



Introduction

Chiltern Railways has applied to the Secretary of State for Transport for statutory powers to upgrade the Bicester to Oxford railway, in order to run fast and frequent trains between Oxford and London Marylebone.

This paper:

- introduces Chiltern Railways and its Evergreen 3 proposals
- outlines the Transport & Works Act process
- provides a guide to the various documents which form the Application
- sets out how members of the public and other stakeholders can get involved



London Marylebone: Chiltern's award-winning West End station



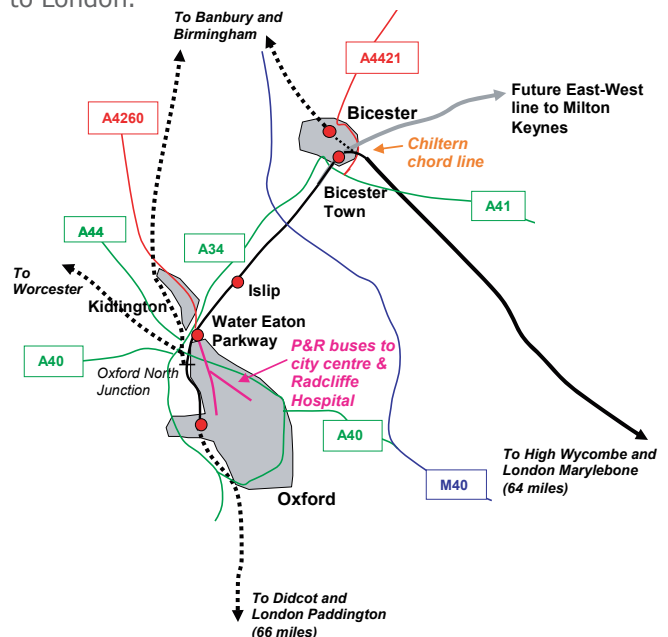
Warwick Parkway station

Chiltern Railways

Chiltern Railways has operated the London Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street and London to Aylesbury lines since railway privatisation in 1996. The company was originally a management and staff buy-out and is now owned by Deutsche Bahn (Germany's national railway), but the same senior management team have remained in place throughout. Over the past 13 years Chiltern has become a railway success story with a 220% growth in traffic alongside consistently delivering high levels of punctuality (over 99% of trains on time) and passenger satisfaction (over 90% satisfied or very satisfied).

In 2002 Chiltern was granted a unique 20-year franchise. Whilst some train operators pay the Government a substantial premium, Chiltern is instead required to deliver long-term investment in the railway for the benefit of both passengers and the community. As a result the company has undertaken a wide range of infrastructure projects, including track doubling ("Evergreen 1"); capacity enhancements and extra platforms at London Marylebone ("Evergreen 2"); and new stations at Warwick Parkway and Aylesbury Vale Parkway. Chiltern thus has a unique combination of experience in both train operations and managing major construction projects.

Chiltern is now proposing the "Evergreen 3" project, which includes a £100m scheme to give Oxford a new rail route to London.



The proposed Oxford to Bicester upgrade which forms part of Chiltern's plans to run services through to London Marylebone

Benefits of the scheme

The Chiltern Railways' scheme will deliver the following key benefits to passengers, to the community and to the environment:

- **Sustainable transport.** On average, trains are much more environmentally friendly than cars per passenger kilometre travelled and lighter trains such as those operated by Chiltern do best of all. The new Chiltern services will provide a convenient alternative for motorists, helping to save energy, reduce CO₂ emissions and relieve congestion on the A34 and M40.
- **More trains and more choice between Oxford and London.** Whilst Oxford currently has only one rail route to London, Cambridge has two, with the result that rail's market share from Cambridge is much higher than from Oxford. Passengers appreciate the choice and convenience, and the environment gains from less traffic on the road network.
- **A timely alternative route to London.** Between 2012 and 2017 a number of major engineering projects will take place on the Oxford to Paddington line, including the rebuilding of Reading station, Crossrail to Maidenhead, Oxford resignalling and Great Western electrification. These welcome improvements will inevitably cause disruption on that line and the Chiltern route will give Oxford a much needed and timely alternative route to London.
- **A new railhead for North Oxford.** Our new station at Water Eaton Parkway will be a multi-modal transport hub, with fast bus links to the city centre, the Radcliffe Hospital and Headington. It will have all the facilities expected at a mainline station, plenty of parking for bikes and cars and a new road layout to help reduce the queues on the A4165. Kidlington will at last have a railway station nearby, whilst passengers from north Oxford and the surrounding area will no longer have to travel through the city centre to catch a train. This will in turn benefit passengers from the rest of the city, as congestion on the roads into Oxford will be reduced.
- **Direct trains from Islip to London** for the first time ever.
- **Easier commuting from Bicester to Oxford.** Fast and frequent trains will revolutionise travel from Bicester to Oxford, and give a real alternative to the congested A34. Commuters will have a choice of destinations as well – Oxford station is convenient for the city centre, whilst the direct buses from Water Eaton Parkway will make it easy to access businesses in north Oxford, along the Banbury Road and at the Radcliffe Hospital.
- **More trains from Bicester and a choice of stations.** The new Oxford to London service will give Bicester Town two trains each hour to London - in addition to the existing services from Bicester North. Bicester will thus get twice as many trains to London as now. Bicester Town station will be completely rebuilt with a ticket hall and coffee shop, giving passengers from the south side of the town a mainline station on their doorstep. This will avoid the trek to Bicester North and free up car parking spaces there for people living on the north side of town.
- **Direct trains to Bicester Village.** As a leading centre for designer shopping, Bicester Village is one of England's favourite visitor attractions – and happens to be next door to Bicester Town station. Fast, frequent and direct trains from London and Oxford will ensure that many more visitors come by rail – helping get more cars off the road, and helping the success of one of the area's largest employers.
- **A rail link from Oxford to High Wycombe.** For the first time in 40 years there will be direct trains between these two important centres – and connecting services will link to other destinations such as Wembley Stadium station which is right next to the National Stadium and Wembley Arena.
- **Safer journeys for everyone.** Britain's railways are one of the world's safest transport systems but level crossings remain a major safety risk. In recent years, around a dozen members of the public have been killed each year at level crossings and over 90% of fatalities are due to user error or abuse. By closing or replacing most of the level crossings on the line, Chiltern will be improving safety for everyone. (Visit networkrail.co.uk to learn more about level crossings and the fatal accidents that can occur when users fail to obey the safety rules.)

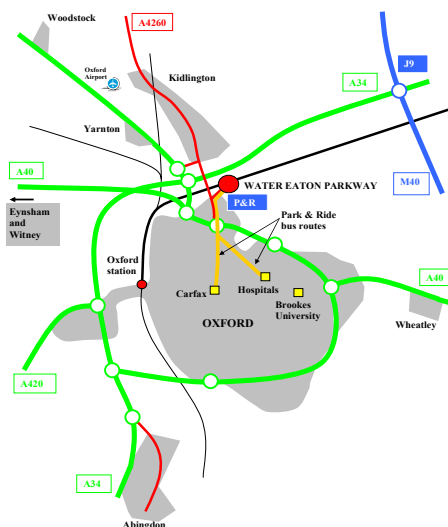
Train services

Chiltern Railways plans to run two trains an hour each way between Oxford and London Marylebone, calling at Water Eaton Parkway, Bicester Town and High Wycombe. Selected trains will also call at Islip. Projected journey times are 66 minutes Oxford to London, 58 minutes Water Eaton Parkway to London, 14 minutes Bicester to Oxford and 38 minutes Oxford to High Wycombe.

The existing freight service of three to five trains each way a day will continue, again helping to relieve traffic congestion on Oxfordshire's roads.



Fast and frequent trains are a feature of the proposed service



Water Eaton Parkway: a new transport hub for north Oxford

Description of the scheme

Chiltern Railways are seeking permission for a range of works, including:

- A new "chord line" at Bicester, to connect Chiltern's London-Birmingham line with the east-west line to Oxford. This will cross open land between Gavray Drive and the ring road, Charbridge Lane.
- Upgrading the Bicester-Oxford line for higher speeds, with new signalling and safety systems, and reinstating the double track removed by British Rail in the 1970s.
- Rebuilding Bicester Town station, with two platforms, a staffed ticket office and coffee shop, extra car parking and easy access from both sides of the railway.
- Improving Islip station, which will remain a facility for the village.
- A new station at Water Eaton Parkway, adjacent to the existing bus park and ride terminus. This will be a multi-modal interchange for trains, cars, buses and bikes, to serve Kidlington and north Oxford, with all the facilities expected at a main-line station. The work will include demolishing the derelict grain silos, relocating the rail aggregates depot to the north eastern edge of the site, constructing additional car parking for rail users and remodelling the road junctions so as to reduce the queues on the A4165.
- A new independent line between Oxford North Junction (near Stone Meadow) to Oxford station. This will use the trackbed of the old line that was lifted many years ago, and is all within the existing railway boundary.
- Two new platforms at Oxford station, on the site of the disused parcels depot. These will be aligned to facilitate any future rebuilding of the station as a whole. There will be step-free access to the other platforms for passengers changing trains and a direct exit to the station forecourt to avoid the crowds in the main booking hall.
- Mitigating measures where appropriate; e.g. to protect wildlife or reduce the noise from trains.
- Most of the work will be done in daylight hours on weekdays, and, where possible, the materials needed will be delivered by rail – minimising the impact on both lineside residents and on the environment.

The East-West Rail Link

The line between Bicester and Oxford may also form part of the proposed East West Rail Link which would connect Oxford with Milton Keynes, Bedford and beyond. This is being promoted by the East West Rail consortium of local authorities (including Oxfordshire County Council) who are currently undertaking detailed engineering studies on reinstating the line beyond Bicester to Bletchley. Chiltern is therefore including provision for East West Rail trains on the Bicester-Oxford line. This will reduce the cost to the public sector if and when the East West Rail project goes ahead.

As well as the planned Oxford to Milton Keynes passenger service, the East West Rail project may result in additional freight trains along the route. This however depends on decisions by the Department for Transport which have yet to be made.



Chiltern's improvements have continued to boost rail services in the region

The Transport & Works Act

All railways operate under statutory powers, which historically were granted by an Act of Parliament. However, the law recognises that railway operations will develop over time. Changes to the number of trains operated, the speed limits along the line and to track and signalling layouts, are thus regarded as matters for the railway authorities, and are not subject to external controls. Most of the work needed to upgrade the Bicester to Oxford line falls within these categories, and would not normally need any new authorisation.

Where a new railway line is proposed, when land or works are required outside the existing railway boundary, or where alterations to public highways and rights of way are proposed, new statutory powers are needed. Since 1992 these have been granted by means of a Transport and Works Act (TWA) Order. Chiltern Railways will be building a new connecting line at Bicester and a new station at Water Eaton Parkway, and will also be making safety improvements at the many level crossings along the line, all of which require authorisation by a TWA Order.

The TWA process

The Transport and Works Act 1992 provides the means for authorising new railways, tramways, canals and harbours in England and Wales. A TWA Order gives statutory powers to construct and operate the railway; to acquire land by compulsory purchase if necessary; to stop up or divert highways, other rights of way and navigable waterways; and to close level crossings. A direction for deemed planning permission, which confers planning permission, and applications for other consents (for example a Scheduled Monument Consent) can be applied for at the same time.

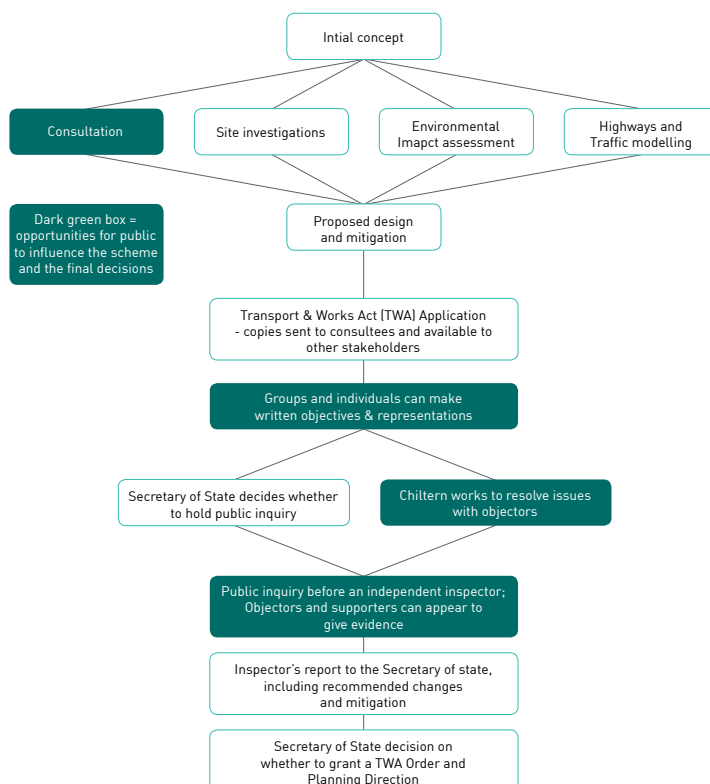
A TWA Order is not needed to restore double track on a railway which was originally double track or to relay or move existing tracks or to increase the number or speed of trains. These powers already exist.

TWA Orders are granted by the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport and the TWA process is designed so that the evidence and views of all stakeholders can be properly taken into account before the SoS makes a decision. "Stakeholders" are any individual or organisation who may be affected by the proposed scheme. They include local authorities, land and property owners affected, local residents, local businesses and voluntary or statutory bodies with relevant functions or interests such as the environment or heritage.

Once the Application is submitted to the SoS, anyone wishing to make an objection or other representation must do so by a set date - normally 42 days after the submission. If objections are made the SoS is then likely to announce that a Public Inquiry is to be held. The Inquiry is held by an independent Inspector appointed by the SoS and objectors are entitled to appear at the Inquiry and state their case. The Inspector will then produce a report for the SoS. The report may include recommendations for changes to the proposed scheme or additional mitigations and safeguards which the Inspector feels are justified on the basis of the evidence submitted.

Chiltern would expect an Inquiry to take place in summer 2010, but meanwhile will be working with objectors to reach agreement on as many issues as possible. A decision by the SoS on whether to grant an Order is likely in 2011. The diagram alongside shows how the TWA process works, and the various opportunities for stakeholder involvement. (Note: a diagram to be included).

A step by step guide to the TWA



The TWA Application documents

Listed below are the principal documents which constitute the Application for the Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport on 6th January 2010. These can be viewed on the Evergreen 3 website, at www.chiltern-evergreen3.co.uk.

- 1. Copy Application.** Formal request to the Secretary of State (SoS) for the TWA Order.
- 2. Draft Order.** Sets out the provisions which Chiltern is requesting the SoS to include in the proposed TWA Order.
- 3. Explanatory Memorandum.** An outline guide to (1).
- 4. Statement of Aims.** Outline of the main aims of the scheme.
- 5. Statement of Consultation.** Summary of the consultation with stakeholders carried out by Chiltern.
- 6. List of Consents, Permissions and Licences.** List of other permissions being sought or which will be needed.
- 7. Funding Statement.** Outline of the proposals to finance the scheme.
- 8. Estimate of Costs.** Estimated costs of the scheme.
- 9. Order Plans and Sections.** Plans of the proposed works and land requirements along the line of route, including stopping up or diversion of roads, bridleways and footpaths and a plan showing land at Bicester which may be open space and proposed replacement open space.
- 10. Book of Reference.** Description of land proposed to be subject to powers of compulsory acquisition and temporary use and list of the landowners, occupiers and tenants affected by the powers.
- 11. Public Rights of Way Report.** Proposals for closing or replacing level crossings, and for diverting or closing existing, or constructing new, roads and public rights of way.
- 12. Request for Deemed Planning Permission, Conditions and Reserved Matters.** Draft Planning Conditions Request for the equivalent of full planning permission.
- 13. Planning Direction Drawings.** Drawings Plans and drawings of proposed development, to accompany the request for deemed planning permission (12).
- 14. Planning Statement.** Sets out relevant national, regional and local planning policies and how the scheme meets these.
- 15. Environmental Statement.** Detailed assessment of how the scheme impacts on a wide range of environmental issues (e.g. wildlife habitats, landscape quality, highway traffic, noise), together with proposed mitigation where necessary, including plans and technical annexes.
- 16. Design and Access Statement.** Principles for the detailed designs for stations and bridges, which will be submitted for later approval by the local planning authorities if the TWA Order is approved.
- 17. Non-Technical Summary.** A summary of the findings in the Environmental Statement (15).
- 18. Public Rights of Way Plans.** Plans for closing or replacing level crossings, and for diverting or closing existing, or constructing new, roads and public rights of way.

Making an Objection

Any affected person is entitled to make an objection or representation on any relevant aspect of the scheme. This should state the grounds of your objection or representation. It is helpful if it also sets out proposals for changes or mitigation that would overcome any problems identified.

Objections and representations should be sent 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 SW1P 4DR

Email: transportandworksact@dft.gsi.gov.uk

to reach the Department by 17th February 2010.



Evergreen 3: designed to relieve road congestion and slow the growth in carbon emissions

Further Information

For general enquiries about the Scheme please contact:

Natasha Gough
ERM
Eaton House
Wallbrook Court
North Hinksey Lane
Oxford
OX2 0QS

Telephone - 01865 384896

Email - consultation@chiltern-evergreen3.co.uk

The TWAO Application, Environmental Statement and the Non-Technical Summary, along with other project information, are also available on the Chiltern 'Evergreen 3' Website:

www.chiltern-evergreen3.co.uk

ELECTRONIC VERSIONS OF DOCUMENTS are available free of charge on request on Compact Disc (CD).

Please contact the project team if you would like any of the project documents in electronic format.

PURCHASING HARD COPY VERSIONS OF DOCUMENTS
All documents can be purchased in hard copy, at a reasonable cost.

Please contact the project team if you would like to purchase any of the project documents and a price will be quoted.

Accuracy

Whilst this document is produced in good faith, Chiltern Railways will not be held liable for any errors and omissions, nor any misinterpretation that may result. Stakeholders should thus seek proper legal advice where appropriate.

Chiltern Railways Consultation Team