

---

**Document B**

**The closure process**

**Author: Vincent Stops**

Time: 10.00 am

Venue : Watford Colosseum,  
Rickmansworth Road, Watford,  
WD17 3JN

Contact : 020 7505 9000

---

**The closure process**

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To set out the background and process undertaken as part of the consideration of the proposed closure and discontinuance of services to and from Watford station. It further describes to members their duties under the Railways Act 2005.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 Watford station is one of the northern terminal stations on the Metropolitan line. There is a long-standing aspiration to divert the Metropolitan line, via the former Croxley Green branch line, to terminate at Watford Junction station. This would entail a short section of new railway being built to connect the Metropolitan line to the former Croxley Green branch line. The project is known as the Croxley Rail Link. See Appendices A & B below for schematics of the existing and proposed Metropolitan line.
- 2.2 This Croxley Rail Link is jointly promoted by London Underground Limited, as the operator of the Metropolitan line, and Hertfordshire County Council (the Metropolitan line terminates in Hertfordshire). Powers to construct the Croxley Rail Link are presently being sought under a Transport and Works Act (TWA) 1992 order. The TWA process is akin to a planning application, but applies to the construction of transport infrastructure. The process is overseen by the Department for Transport and commenced on 6 January 2012 with the publication of notices in newspapers. There was a 42 day objection period which ended on 17 February 2012.

**3 Process issues**

- 3.1 As part of the Croxley Rail Link project, LUL (the service operator) are proposing that Watford station and services to and from it are to close to passengers. This will only occur if and when the Croxley Rail Link becomes operational.
- 3.2 On 23 February 2012 LUL initiated the closure process with notices in two national and one local newspaper. The start of a 6 week objection period commenced with the publication of a second set of notices on 2 March 2012, again in two national and one local newspaper. A timetable for London TravelWatch's consideration of this closure proposal is appended below. Following its deliberations, London TravelWatch must report, by 2 September 2012, its findings to the Mayor of London.

- 3.3 The Secretariat met with LUL, prior to the start of the process, and agreed the format and wording of station posters advertising the closure. These were to be posted at all Metropolitan line stations clearly visible to passengers (one version for Watford and Croxley stations, a second for other Metropolitan line stations) from 23 February 2012. Copies of the notices and posters are included in Document D of the agenda pack.
- 3.4 The Secretariat visited both Watford and Croxley stations plus a selection of other Metropolitan line stations early in the consultation period and can confirm notices were posted at stations at reasonable locations. Additionally LUL sent out emails to its registered, Watford station, Oyster users. A copy of this email is included in Document D.
- 3.5 Members should note that although the TWA and this closure process are separate, we requested, and have received, from the DfT the TWA objections that relate to the closure of the station and passenger services. We continue to receive objections after the formal closure date that will we will take account of and report any new issues to members.
- 3.6 During the objection period we received 16 objections / comments via the TWA process. We received 104 responses following the posting of the closure notices and as a result of TfL emailing its Watford station Oyster users. We received 99 objections on return slips, issued as tear-off portions of leaflets delivered by local councillors to residents. Subsequent to the close of the objection period we have received 5 items of correspondence. One of the late objections contained a link to an online petition of 1148 names, though some of these names are anonymous, some without addresses.
- 3.7 As objections and comments were received, during the objection period, London TravelWatch informed the Mayor of London and LUL (the service operator) about the objections.
- 3.8 On 25 April 2012 the Secretariat wrote to LUL setting out a summary of objections and questions flowing from them and from its own considerations. On 19 May 2012 LUL responded to the letter together with its 'Supporting Statement'. There has been one additional item of correspondence between the Secretariat and LUL. These letters, LUL's response and Supporting Statement are included as Document E and F of the agenda pack.
- 3.9 On 15 May 2012 members visited Watford station at 07:30 to see for themselves the activity at the station. Members also walked to the sites of the proposed new stations and to Watford High Street station and travelled by train to Watford Junction station.
- 3.10 On 17 May 2012 we wrote to all consultees to invite them to the Panel meeting on 14 June 2012.

## **4 The Board's Duty**

4.1 It should be noted that the legislation governing this process (The Railways Act 2005, Section 25 and Schedule 8) refers to London Transport Users Committee. This is the formal name for London TravelWatch.

4.2 London TravelWatch is required, under the Act to:

*(a) consider the objections made during that period [the objection period];*

*(b) consider any representations made by the service operator; and*

*(c) report to the Mayor of London on the hardship the Committee considers will be caused by the proposed closure.*

4.3 *If London TravelWatch decides—*

*(a) to hear an objector orally, or*

*(b) to hear oral representations from the service operator,*

*the hearing must be in public.*

4.4 *The report to the Mayor of London under the above paragraph (4.19 (c)) may contain proposals for alleviating any hardship to which it refers.*

4.5 *After receiving the report the Mayor of London may require further reports from the London TravelWatch relating to the proposed closure.*

4.6 *London TravelWatch must send to the service operator a copy of every report or further report it makes.*

## **5 The Board's consideration**

5.1 To fulfil the duties described a Closure Panel of three members was established to consider the closure proposal.

5.2 To facilitate the Board's consideration the Secretariat has produced a report for members of the Panel. This report (Document C in the agenda pack) summarises the objectors comments and issues and any responses to those objections and issues from the promoters of the closure. Members have decided to consider the issues in public at the Colosseum venue in Watford on 14 June 2012. At that meeting LUL will present its case and objectors will be invited to speak to the panel.

5.3 In their consideration of hardship and what might be done to alleviate hardship members are advised that they need to consider the cost to the public purse and consider whether any proposals represent value for money.

5.4 A final report will be produced for the Mayor of London prior to 2 September 2012.

## **6 Equalities and inclusion implications**

6.1 These issues will be explored as part of member's consideration of the closure proposals.

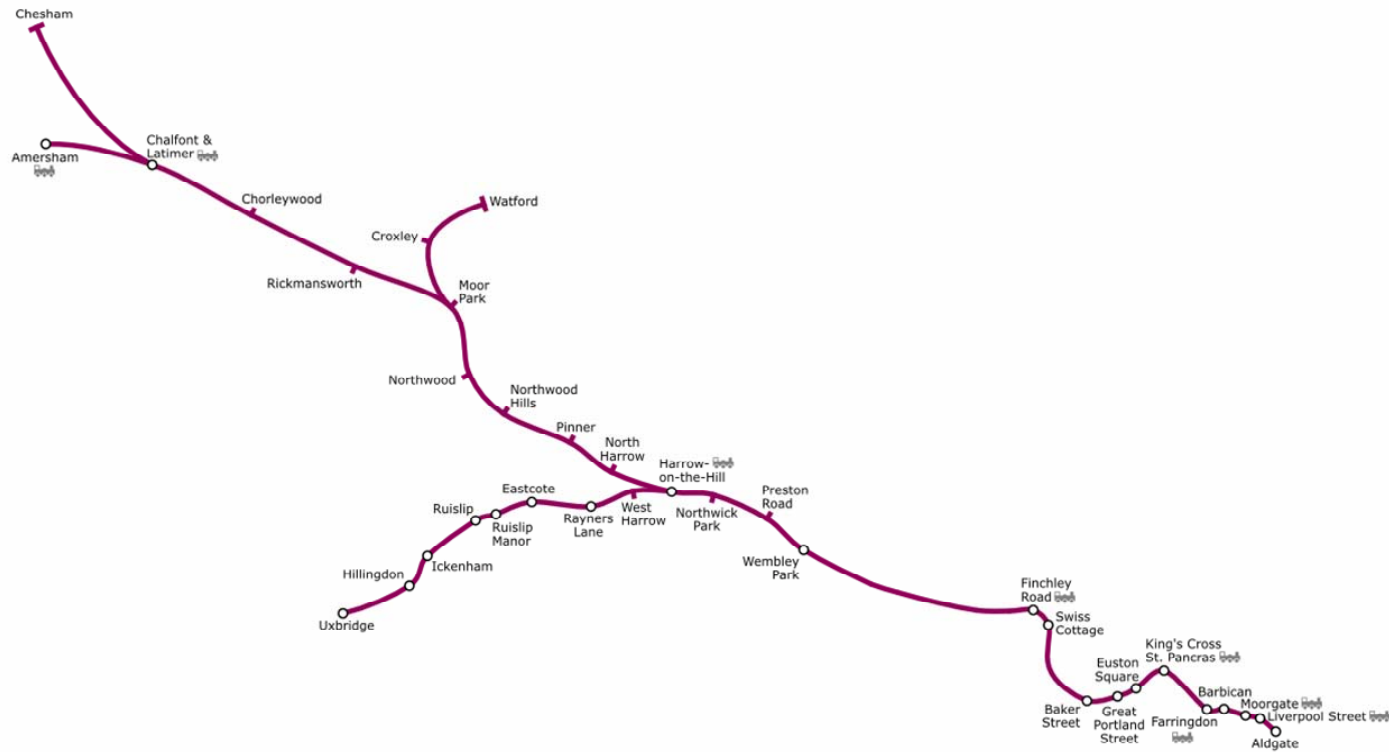
## **7 Legal powers**

7.1 London TravelWatch is required to conduct this process under the Railways Act 2005, Section 25 and the associated Schedule 8.

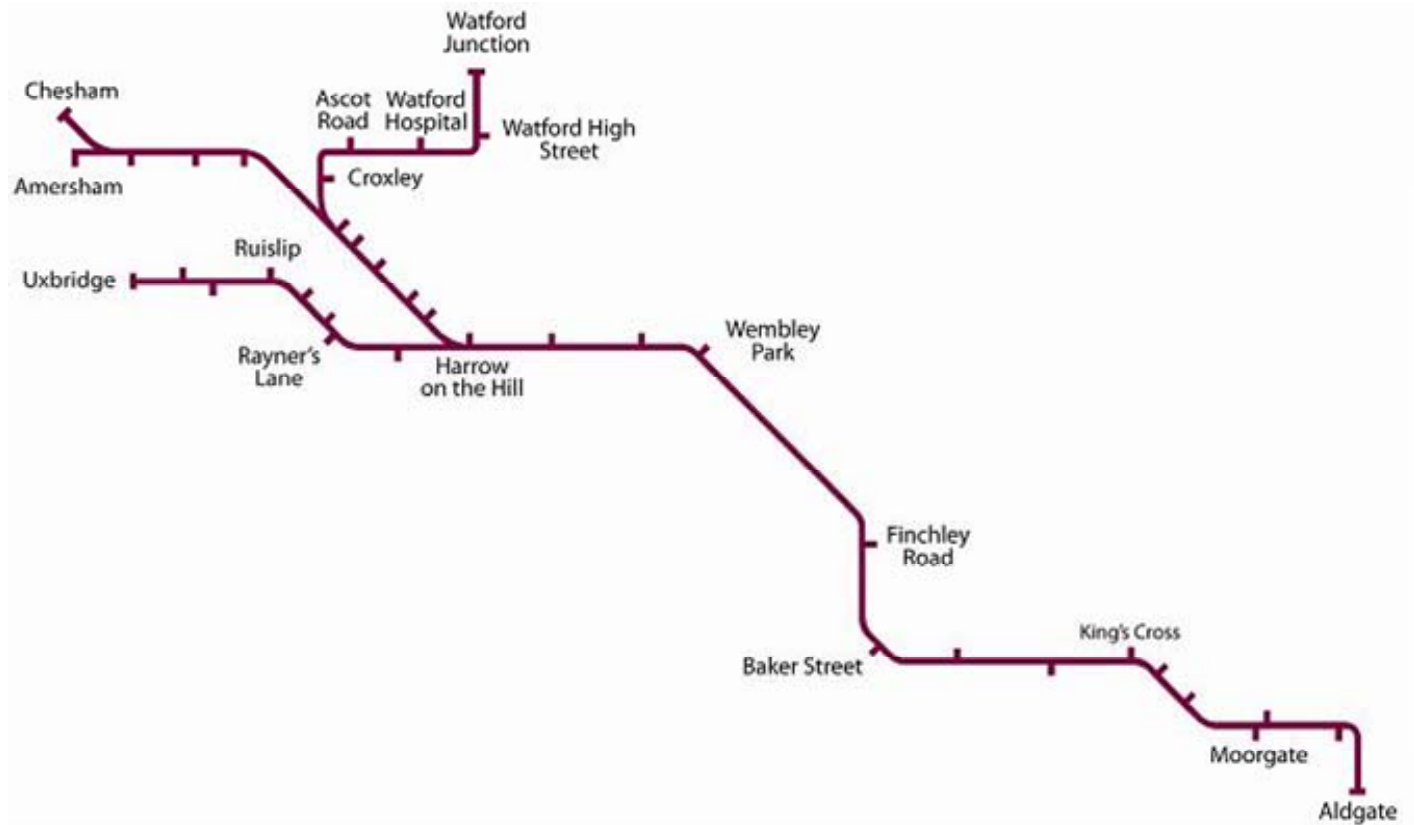
## **8 Financial implications**

8.1 The resources for this process is primarily staff time and this will be contained within the present staff budget. There will be some additional administrative costs and costs associated with the hiring of the venue and holding a public meeting in Watford.

# The existing Metropolitan Line



# The proposed Metropolitan Line



## Appendix C

### **Timeline for the Watford station closure process**

23 February 2012	First closure notice in two national and one local paper.
2 March 2012	Repeat of notices in newspapers and posters put up at all Metropolitan line stations
3 March 2012	Start of objection period
27 March 2012	Closure panel appointed
13 April 2012	Close of objection period, 'Proposal' date
15 May 2012	Members site visit to Watford station
14 June 2012	Public meeting in Watford
2 September 2012	Deadline for submission of the panel's report to the Mayor.of London