

LTW 372

Annex A



London TravelWatch Response to the West Midlands & Chiltern RUS Draft for Consultation

Feb 2011

London TravelWatch Response



London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public.

Our role is to:

1. Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media
2. Consult with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users
3. Investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers, and
4. Monitor trends in service quality.

Our aim is to press in all that we do for a better travel experience all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.

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Executive Summary

We Support

The broad thrust of the draft RUS that issues regarding the London end of the Chiltern route should be dealt with by reviewing the Evergreen 3 timetable and by planning a new timetable for the Aylesbury route in connection with London Underground's Metropolitan line upgrade.

We Recommend

The finalised RUS should more strongly spell out some principles for these timetable reviews.

For the High Wycombe line serious attention must be given to the services at the TfL fare zone stations between Wembley Stadium and West Ruislip and to some other smaller stations on the route, to connectivity from south of High Wycombe to Banbury and beyond, and to first and last train times.

For the Aylesbury line, the timetable review should start from a blank sheet, should pay particular attention to the needs of the growth town of Aylesbury, and consider possible new services using the proposed Croxley link and the proposed extension from Aylesbury to Milton Keynes.

The finalised RUS should encourage both the industry and external stakeholders to pursue the provision of Chiltern platforms at West Hampstead'

It should also discuss the possibility of electrifying both Chiltern routes and of linking the High Wycombe line to a possible High Speed 2 branch to Heathrow Airport.

1 Introduction

London TravelWatch provides this written submission to the West Midlands & Chilterns Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation as the independent statutory watchdog representing transport users of all modes in London and rail users in its surrounding area. The map below shows London TravelWatch's areas of National Rail responsibility.

Diagram 1 – London TravelWatch Rail Remit



London TravelWatch's remit for this route utilisation strategy extends from London Marylebone to Aylesbury and Bicester.

2 London TravelWatch's Aspirations

2.1 Bicester North to London Marylebone

Our policy for all stations within the TfL zones (i.e. Wembley Stadium – West Ruislip) is for 'turn up and go' 6 trains per hour (tph) all day metro service. at as near as possible to even 10 mins. intervals, 7 days per week. . Neither this, nor a compromise 4 tph, is achievable on the present 2-track infrastructure and for the present there is no realistic prospect of investment in widening this section of the line

Regrettably, Chiltern Railways' most recently published Evergreen 3 draft timetable (issued with their track access application in autumn 2009) does not even offer a basic 2 tph all day 7 day service at these stations. This is a matter which must be progressed as soon as possible, and we cover the topic in more detail in our draft report "Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes", a copy of which is attached to this paper.

We do not believe this matter needs to be part of the RUS process, but we do consider that the finalised RUS should acknowledge it as an important issue.

There is also an issue of inadequate services at some stations north of West Ruislip. This too is covered in our draft report, and needs to be acknowledged in the finalised RUS.

2.2 Aylesbury to London Marylebone

The basic Aylesbury via Amersham service should be 4 tph peak / 2 tph off-peak, with at least 2 tph at all times to Aylesbury Vale Parkway.

The recent and continuing population expansion at Aylesbury points to a need for faster services both peak and off-peak. We support the draft RUS recommendation that future services on this line should be considered jointly between National Rail parties and London Underground. our draft report "Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes" looks at this in more detail.

2.3 First and last trains

The traffic day for all services in the London TravelWatch area should provide:

- First arrivals at Marylebone no later than 0600 (0730 Sundays). (Present first arrivals are 0620 [0840 Sundays])

- Last departures from Marylebone no earlier than 2400 (0030 for metro stations) (Present last departures are 0010 [2345 Sundays])

Again, “Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes” goes into more detail. Insofar as shortcomings are due to Network Rail’s track maintenance arrangements this is a RUS issue and the finalised RUS should clearly reflect this.

2.3.1 Stations

There is a range of issues regarding stations which are covered in other London TravelWatch publications which are available on our website <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/home/home>.

Chiltern Railways’ record on station development is quite good, and we do not consider it necessary to make this an issue for the RUS.

3 Detailed Comments

Comments on draft RUS's selection of gaps for examination

The following gaps have been extracted from section 6.4 of the draft RUS as being relevant, in whole or in part, to the London TravelWatch area.

| <i>Table 6.1 – Aylesbury corridor</i> | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gap Issue number | Gap Issue | Consolidated gap | Consolidated gap number |
| I-1 | Crowding close to London identified in the Thames Valley Regional Planning Assessment (RPA) from Aylesbury to Marylebone, south of Harrow. Housing growth also planned. | Aylesbury corridor capacity and service mix. | G-1 |
| I-2 | Service mix, especially on Aylesbury corridor on the Metropolitan lines due to the mix of London Underground Limited (LUL) services with heavy rail services that impacts on service provision and performance. | | |
| I-3 | Low linespeeds at various locations (especially the Aylesbury corridor on the Metropolitan lines) means relatively slow journey times. | Aylesbury corridor journey time. | G-1a |

Comments

We agree that these are gaps that need to be investigated and that they can be sensibly consolidated in the manner suggested.

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I-4 | North-South Links in Buckinghamshire, particularly connectivity of Aylesbury. | North-South Links in Buckinghamshire, particularly connectivity of Aylesbury. | G-2 |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

Comments

We agree that this gap needs to be investigated.

Table 6.2 – Leamington Spa and Chiltern corridor

| Gap Issue number | Gap Issue | Consolidated gap | Consolidated gap number |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| I-11 | High Level Output Specification (HLOS) – peak demand into Birmingham to be accommodated by the end of Control Period 4 (CP4). | These gap issues were closed as they were considered to be dealt with through the HLOS Control Period 4 determination. | N/A |
| I-12 | HLOS – peak demand into London Marylebone to be accommodated by the end of CP4. | | |

Comments

Gap I-12 is relevant to London TravelWatch. We are unconvinced by the response given above. Whilst we accept that Chiltern’s Evergreen 3 infrastructure scheme and associated additional extra rolling stock will increase peak capacity into Marylebone, we are concerned that the manner in which they plan to use this extra capacity may not meet all the needs of passengers and potential passengers in the London TravelWatch area.

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I-14 | Poor service provision at some smaller stations within the Chiltern area. | This gap issue was closed as it was considered a day-to-day management issue by the local train operator. | N/A |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

Comments

This is a very important issue for London TravelWatch.

In the early stages of the RUS, on the basis of what Chiltern Railways told us about their plans for Evergreen 3, we were content that they would be addressing this problem so far as the London TravelWatch area was concerned, and that it therefore did not need to be dealt with by the RUS process.

However as Chiltern’s scheme development and timetable planning has evolved (as evidenced in further discussions and in the draft timetable issued with their track access application in autumn 2009) it has become clear that both their and our ambitions for the smaller stations are unlikely to be achieved – at least within the overall timetable philosophy and financial constraints of the project. Although their draft timetable has doubtless been further refined during the 15 months since it was published, and will no doubt be further developed, we do not now believe that the problems with serving the smaller stations can be easily solved.

It should also be noted that the catchment areas for these smaller stations are planned to have a substantial increase in population and employment in the period of The London Plan and individual local authority Local Development Frameworks. Provision of adequate public transport services to serve these developments is therefore is of great importance.

We therefore cannot now agree with the response above, nor with the expanded version in para. 6.5.3 of the draft RUS. We believe that the issue cannot be left solely with the train operator. A proper resolution will require collaboration with other stakeholders, including potential funders.

| | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I-15 | Station congestion at London Marylebone in the future resulting from increased demand on Chiltern services, particularly interchange with London Underground and heavy crowding on the Bakerloo line. | This gap issue was closed as station congestion is managed under the station management regime. It should also be noted that the London and South East RUS will consider and assess in detail central London termini capacity over the medium to long term. | N/A |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

Comments

We believe this is a potentially important issue but do not agree with the response given, nor with the expanded version in para. 6.5.4 of the draft RUS. Problems of interchange with the Bakerloo line cannot be resolved by Chiltern Railways (the train operator) alone, but must be examined and dealt with jointly with Transport for London / London Underground. Also, solutions to any congestion problems which may arise might involve action elsewhere, e.g. the long-discussed interchange station at West Hampstead.

Marylebone has restricted accessibility to many parts of London which the London Plan envisages significant growth in population and employment. The connectivity of the Chiltern route to other parts of London would be significantly enhanced if an interchange could be provided at West Hampstead, giving access to the Jubilee, North London and Thameslink lines to Westminster, London Bridge, Canary Wharf, Stratford, Croydon, Gatwick and Luton Airports. It could also produce overall journey time reductions to these parts of London particularly for the section of the Chiltern line inward from Bicester to London.

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|
| I-18 | Peak capacity issues for passenger services: central Birmingham. | Leamington Spa and Chiltern capacity. | G-4 |
| I-19 | Peak capacity on Chiltern services. | | |
| I-20 | All day capacity Chiltern corridor: London – Birmingham. | | |
| I-21 | Unattractive journey time London Marylebone – Birmingham on Chiltern route. | | |
| I-22 | Lack of capacity between London Marylebone and Banbury leads to performance problems and rigidity in timetable structure. | | |

Comments

Gaps I-19 to I-22 are all relevant to London TravelWatch and we note their consolidation into a single gap.

| | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I-27 | London air passenger demand growth is forecast at London Heathrow Airport so improved rail access required. | Air passenger demand growth is forecast at London Heathrow Airport so improved rail access required. | G-8 |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

Comments

This is issue is one of London TravelWatch’s concerns.

| <i>Table 6.14 – Generic gaps</i> | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gap Issue number | Gap Issue | Consolidated gap | Consolidated gap number |
| I-133 | Improved evening services within the RUS area. | Improved evening services within the RUS area. | G-43 |
| I-134 | Improved Sunday services within the RUS area. | Improved Sunday services within the RUS area. | G-44 |

Comments

These are important issues in the London TravelWatch area. Evening and Sunday services to some stations fall below our frequency aspirations, some last trains are too early, two stations have no evening or weekend services, and first trains, particularly on Sundays, are too late.

We are very disappointed, when reading the discussion on these issues in section 6.7 of the draft RUS, to see that it is solely about the West Midlands area and that Chiltern’s services are not mentioned.

| | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|------|
| I-136 | Car-parking. | West Midlands and Chilterns RUS area car parking. | G-46 |
|-------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|------|

Comment

This is an important issue for London TravelWatch, particularly in the more rural parts of our area where people live some distance from their station and bus services are poor or even non-existent.

In fairness we would say that Chiltern Railways’ record on car park development is good and we see no reason to doubt that this will continue.

Within Greater London (i.e. the travelcard zones) we do not generally advocate significant expansion of car parks. Most such stations have a catchment area in which walking, cycling or bus links are practical and at an acceptable standard. We are keen that cycle parking is good quality and sufficient to meet demand.

Comments on draft RUS's selection of options

Aylesbury line

London TravelWatch supports the recommended options for the Aylesbury via Amersham line.

We agree that the introduction of the new Metropolitan line S stock combined with resignalling provides an opportunity to re-examine the timetable for both the Marylebone – Aylesbury and Baker St. – Amersham / Chesham services from scratch, and that this should include consideration of stopping patterns.

The aims should be to ensure sufficient seating capacity for all journeys of more than twenty minutes, and faster journeys to London from all stations, particularly from Aylesbury. The latter has grown tremendously in recent years. This trend is planned to continue, yet the town has a train service that is both slower and less frequent than many similar towns around the periphery of London.

It is essential, as recommended by the draft RUS, that this must be a joint exercise involving Network Rail, Chiltern, and London Underground / TfL.

We also agree that opportunities should be examined to improve the infrastructure beyond the completion of Metropolitan line resignalling and that this should be part of the same exercise.

This should also include consideration of possible new services from the Aylesbury line to Watford Junction if the Croxley link is built, and should examine options for through services over the proposed link from Aylesbury to Milton Keynes.

More detailed London TravelWatch recommendations for the framework of this study are contained in our report "Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes" which is currently in draft and is attached to this paper.

High Wycombe line (Marylebone to Princes Risborough and beyond)

Although called the Leamington Spa and Chiltern corridor in the draft RUS, from the viewpoint of London TravelWatch area readers we feel it is more meaningful to call this the High Wycombe line.

The draft RUS capacity analysis suggests that by 2019 a few morning peak longer distance services (i.e. trains from north of High Wycombe) will have more passengers than seats and will therefore breach the rules for standing for more than twenty minutes. However in option O-7 the draft RUS points out that this analysis is based on a timetable that is still in the planning stages and may be significantly changed before implementation. It also observes that the scale of the changes from the present timetable will be such that it is very uncertain how existing passengers will redistribute themselves across the new service, and how much extra peak traffic will be flow from the planned accelerations and the new Oxford service.

The draft RUS therefore proposes that possible crowding issues be re-assessed after a sensible period of operation of the Evergreen 3 timetable. We have no difficulty with this approach.

However London TravelWatch is concerned, on the evidence of the draft Evergreen 3 timetable published with Chiltern's track access application, that the planned timetable has shortcomings in respect of the services at smaller stations and for connectivity along the route (both peak and off-peak).

We hope, but are not very confident, that these issues will be addressed by Chiltern's continuing timetable development work. However even if they are, we fear that if overcrowding problems do materialise, likely timetable solutions could well worsen rather than improve the lot of passengers in these regards.

We therefore regard it as important that all timetable work from hereon should take the fullest possible account of the recommendations of our report "Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes" which is currently in draft and is attached to this paper. London TravelWatch asks that the finalised RUS should declare accordingly.

Comments on draft RUS's emerging strategy and longer-term vision

Strategy for Control Period 4 (2009-14)

The draft RUS effectively recommends that no additional action is needed for the period to 2014 given the investment already in progress by Chiltern Railways in Evergreen 3 and by London Underground in its new rolling stock.

London TravelWatch does not dissent from this view, but we are concerned that the manner in which the new capacity will be used may not be in the best interests of all existing or potential passengers in our area. This is an important issue and one that we will pursue with Chiltern and LUL in accordance with our draft paper “Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes”. We would like the finalised RUS to include a reference to the point that providing capacity is one thing, but this does not guarantee that it will be used in the best way.

Strategy for Control Period 5 (2014 - 2019)

Again the draft RUS proposes no further action to increase capacity.

For the Aylesbury line it proposes consideration of timetable option to take advantage of LUL’s resignalling of the Metropolitan line and of their plans to increase their peak service frequencies during this period. We agree.

For the High Wycombe line it proposes that an Evergreen 3 timetable review should include consideration of ways to change high-peak calling patterns to support additional calls at stations close to London. We support this, but would add that the need for additional calls is an all day, all week issue.

In addition to these points, we believe that serious consideration should be given to construction of a Chiltern interchange station at West Hampstead. This is a long-standing aspiration of many parties – not least Chiltern Railways themselves – and we consider it an issue that should be taken up with a serious sense of purpose for resolution by 2019.

All these matters should be taken forward with full regard for our draft paper “Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes”.

Strategy for Control Period 6 (2019 - 2024) and beyond

For this period the draft RUS makes a number of points about the West Midlands area but is silent about the London end of the Chiltern route.

London TravelWatch believes the finalised RUS should draw attention to the following issues –

During this period Chiltern’s diesel trains will be reaching life expiry, or will at least require substantial life extension work plus re-engineering to meet more stringent emissions standards. It would be sensible to look at electrification in order to take advantage of the improved performance and capacity that this can provide and its ability to source fuel from a range of more sustainable sources.

HS2 Ltd. has now identified that a line to Heathrow, if built, will branch off the main high speed line somewhere in the area between Denham and Northolt. Such a branch, by its very nature, would be relatively under-utilised. Consideration could therefore be given to building a link from the Chiltern line. This would address the demand for a rail service to Heathrow from the route's catchment area and improve the utilisation (and therefore the business case) for an HS2 Heathrow branch

With living standards continuing to rise and a need to offer high quality services (speed, frequency, on-board standards and good customer service) the industry must develop so as to encourage people to switch to rail as the most sustainable mode of transport. The daylong need to mix both fast and stopping trains at the increased frequencies implied by this will stretch the present two-track Chiltern main line to breaking point.

Given the long lead times for railway planning and construction, investigation of all these issues needs to start quite soon and we consider that the RUS should recommend accordingly.

Other matters

Matters of presentation of the draft RUS document and certain smaller issues are dealt with in the Appendix to this response.

4 Conclusion

The draft West Midlands & Chiltern RUS focuses far more on the West Midlands than on the London end of the Chiltern route. Given the committed investment programmes of Chiltern (Evergreen 3) and London Underground (Metropolitan line upgrade) which will provide substantial additional capacity over the period of the RUS to 2019, this is understandable.

The draft RUS draws attention to possible overcrowding on services into Marylebone from both the High Wycombe and Aylesbury lines by the end of the period. However in addition to the normal uncertainties of demand forecasting, the fact that both routes will see totally new timetables (and possibly service patterns) once the new investments are completed means there must be considerable uncertainty how passengers will react and therefore how crowded particular trains are likely to be.

The draft RUS therefore recommends that on both lines the matter be pursued by timetable reviews at an appropriate time. For the High Wycombe line this means reviewing the Evergreen 3 timetable once it has been in operation for a reasonable period. For the Aylesbury line it means, in the first instance, a joint process between Chiltern Railways and London Underground to decide on the best option for making use of the latter's new and faster trains and its new signalling system.

London TravelWatch supports this approach, but we consider that there should be some specific guidance from the RUS about some of the issues that should be taken into account in these reviews.

For the High Wycombe line, attention must be paid (even before the Evergreen 3 timetable is finalised) to the continuing poor service currently planned for the TfL fare zone stations between Wembley Stadium and West Ruislip, to inadequate services at some other small stations, to poor connectivity along the route – particularly from south of High Wycombe to Banbury and beyond – and to weaknesses in first and last train times. We think these issues should be more strongly brought out in the finalised RUS, and the industry mandated to pay serious attention to them.

For the Aylesbury line, new timetable planning should fundamentally review both frequencies and calling patterns. It is pertinent to point out that the present timetable on this line is fundamentally 50 years old. Not since the Amersham / Chesham line was electrified (and quadrupled between Harrow and Moor Park) in 1960 has the timetable been re-considered from scratch – a record unique in Britain. Although it has changed substantially over the years and little of the original is now recognisable, the changes have all been incremental in response to particular local pressures and it cannot be the case that it really represents the best option for meeting the needs of the area's 21st century population. This is self-evident when one considers the poor service provided for the growing town of Aylesbury compared to similar towns elsewhere around London.

We therefore believe that planning for a new timetable should start from a clean sheet of paper, with no presupposition about calling patterns, frequencies, or share of mileage between the two operators.

We also believe that account should be taken of possible new services that might be provided over the Croxley link to Watford Junction and over the proposed line from Aylesbury to Milton Keynes, both of which will offer valuable opportunities for new links in the area to attract users from private cars to the more sustainable rail mode. Although these schemes are not yet funded, they are both relatively cheap and it would be foolish to assume that they won't happen within the time horizon of this RUS. It would therefore be unhelpful to plan a new timetable for the Rickmansworth – Aylesbury section which fails to consider these opportunities.

We think these matters should be spelt out in the RUS and, again, the industry mandated to give them serious attention.

We are disappointed that the draft RUS does not even mention the long-standing question of building Chiltern platforms at West Hampstead interchange – something on which Chiltern Railways themselves have done a lot of work. Again we believe that the finalised RUS should – at the very least – acknowledge this project and encourage both the industry and external stakeholders to continue to pursue it.

Finally, for the RUS look-ahead beyond 2019, we consider it should discuss the possibility of electrifying both Chiltern routes and of linking the High Wycombe line to a possible High Speed 2 branch to Heathrow Airport.

Several of the matters raised in this consultation response will be discussed in more detail in our draft paper “Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes”, a copy of which is attached.

Appendix

Presentation and smaller issues regarding the draft RUS document

Page 14 Fig. 2.2. The Watford branch should be shown as a pecked line (other route) and the Chesham branch should be added likewise. Also, the Chesham branch should be added to all similar maps in the document.

Page 16 Para. 1 Bakerloo 'lines' should be singular.

Page 20 3.2 Add that LUL own and operate the infrastructure between Harrow on the Hill and Amersham.

Page 21 1st bullet. This is now three trains per day.

Page 21 3.3.1. 1st para. London should be added to the key employment locations.

Page 22 Para 1 Add – There is now significant London commuting from as far north as the Leamington and Warwick area.

Page 22 3.3.3.3 Service to Stratford is now up to six London trains per day, plus local connections from Leamington Spa.

Page 24 Fig. 3.1 Should now show 2 of the 4 tph LUL Amersham trains going to Chesham. Also, arrows should show to London Baker Street, Chorleywood and Rickmansworth should not be shown as interchanges and Moor Park should be.

Page 27 Fig. 3.5 Sudbury and Harrow Road should be annotated as peak services and in peak direction only.

Sudbury Hill is 1 tph only and should be annotated as Monday – Friday only

South Ruislip and West Ruislip are 1 tph only

Sudbury Hill, South Ruislip and West Ruislip should be shown as interchanges (with LUL)

Gerrards Cross and Beaconsfield are not interchanges.

Birmingham Snow Hill now only has 1 tph from / to Marylebone.

Page 37 The text in paras. 1 & 2 describe Met capacity utilisation Amersham to central London as 50 – 60% in the peak 3 hours. In the high peak it acknowledges that the busiest trains are close to capacity (including standing spaces). It goes on say that the Met upgrade will increase frequency and train capacity and that this “.... would help meet increased demand.”

However it fails to point out that the increase in capacity per train is achieved by increasing the standing space and reducing the number of seats. This may induce some Met passengers to switch to Chiltern.

Also, the new Met S stock will be faster and more comfortable (smoother ride and air conditioning) than the present A stock, so this may induce some transfer from Chiltern to Met.

This is a complex mix of factors which, allied with the continued growth of Aylesbury, means that a very careful joint Chiltern / LUL review will be needed to decide the best timetable option for the Aylesbury / Amersham route once the Met upgrade is completed.

Page 49 Fig 3.19 Line speeds on both Chiltern routes are incorrect.

Page 51 Fig 3.21 Please check the platform lengths at Rickmansworth. Our understanding is that the southbound (at least) is only 5 x 23m cars (unless it has been lengthened for S stock). Also delete Moor Park as this has not been served by Chiltern for many years.

Page 56 3.11.3 – 1st para. This states that the RUS has not collected data for LUL car parks, but in fact Appendix B shows this data for all such stations.

Also, Appendix B shows Moor Park which should be deleted (see above), and incorrectly shows Amersham, Chalfont & Latimer, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth and Harrow on the Hill as having airport interchange.

Page 57 1st column, bottom para. By referring to air in the same group as bus, metro, underground and cycle, this para gives the impression that air is a means of accessing rail, whereas it is of course the other way round.

There is a point to be made about air, namely that the Chiltern line passes within about 4 miles of Heathrow but has no effective connection with it.

Page 57 3.11.4 – bullet points. The selection of Chiltern stations as having “particularly good interchange facilities” is odd.

The only bus serving Princes Risborough station is Chiltern's own Chinnor Rail Link. Whilst very welcome, this only operates Mon – Fri peaks, so can hardly be regarded as a major contribution to bus-rail interchange.

The interchanges at Amersham and Chalfont & Latimer are no different from any other station served by more than one train service. It is just an accident of history that one of the services is provided by an operator which is not part of the National Rail network.

Page 63 4.2.2.3 Evergreen 3 will not now provide a passing facility at Bicester North.

Page 69 4.3.7 London TravelWatch would be concerned if the Stratford Parkway proposal threatens the existing station. The rail market from the London area to Stratford upon Avon is primarily for day-trippers and plus overseas visitors touring the heritage towns of Britain. Chiltern have been very successful in attracting this business to rail since they took over the service. These passengers must have a station which is within a few minutes walk of the town centre.

Page 76 5.2.4.3 The suggested High Wycombe – Heathrow coach link is worth investigating, but it should be compared with a Gerrards Cross – Heathrow link. The latter might offer a shorter journey time and therefore enable a more frequent service from the same resources. With the Evergreen 3 timetable as presently planned, Gerrards Cross will have rail connections to as many relevant towns as High Wycombe. However if London TravelWatch's concerns about High Wycombe's links to the north are addressed (see our draft paper "Development of Train Services for the Chiltern Routes"), the balance might swing back to the latter.