

Marylebone Station  
Great Central House  
Melcombe Place  
London NW1 6JJ

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

**William Knighton**  
Stakeholder Manager

27/06/2019

Dear Aude Pantel,

**The Chiltern Railway Company Limited – Response to the Princes Risborough Expansion Supplementary Planning Document**

**1. The Respondent**

The Chiltern Railway Company Limited (“Chiltern Railways”) operates franchised passenger train services between London Marylebone, Aylesbury Vale Parkway, Stratford-upon-Avon, Birmingham Moor Street stations and Oxford via Bicester Village. The Chiltern Railways franchise is due to expire in 2021, though we are hopeful that we will be successful in agreeing a five-year extension to the franchise as provided for in our contract with the Department for Transport.

**2. General Response**

Chiltern Railways welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Princes Risborough Expansion Supplementary Planning Document (“SPD”). Princes Risborough has seen its services considerably improved under the 20-year Chiltern franchise with upgraded facilities, line speed improvements, upgraded signalling and new journey opportunities all added. As the station facility owner of two stations in the town – Princes Risborough and Monks Risborough – and the provider of Franchise passenger rail services in the town, our response will focus on those elements of the plan affecting our present and future customers and the railway more generally.

Chiltern Railways has previously supplied responses to the Wycombe District Council Consultation on the Local Plan and the Princes Risborough Town Plan Consultation. Both responses welcomed the intentions laid out in the consultation documents to redevelop the area to the east of the station. We also cautioned that the alignment of the Princes Risborough – Aylesbury branch line should be protected in the long term to enable potential double-tracking or electrification to make the most of the connectivity that East West Rail (and a potential High Wycombe - Old Oak Common connection with Crossrail) will provide. Our previous responses have also noted the need for improved amenities for passengers at the stations in a long-term growth context. It is preferable to improve infrastructure in

anticipation of growth rather than after, and we would urge that developer funding should be used for this purpose.

### **3. Specific Response**

Chiltern Railways welcomes the references in the SPD to Policy DM47 of the Local Plan, which safeguards land to ensure that development in the Expansion Area does not prejudice potential double-tracking of the Princes Risborough – Aylesbury line associated with the East West Rail project. East West Rail will provide the opportunity for connectivity with Milton Keynes and points beyond, and it is essential that the line alignment is safeguarded to provide for potential works such as double-tracking, re-signalling and line speed upgrades to maximise the passenger benefits of these new links and provide new capacity to meet continued growth.

The 'Railway Park' concept for a 25-metre wide linear green space alongside the present rail alignment linking Princes Risborough and Monks Risborough railway stations provides for a 15m strip of safeguarded land adjacent to the present alignment, together with a 10m green buffer including retained existing trees and hedgerows to mitigate noise and vibration. Should the option be taken in the future to utilise part of the 'Railway Park' for track enhancement, this could result in houses being around 10m from the railway track. Noise and vibration from the railway are likely to only increase as a result of capacity improvements, and we would caution that while passenger services do not operate at night, freight services do and Network Rail engineering works typically takes place overnight. We welcome the concept of the green buffer, and hope that this will mitigate some of the noise and vibration that an operational railway inevitably causes.

Chiltern Railways notes the emphasis in the Delivery Plan (SPD Section 5) on providing necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure in a timely way to avoid subjecting existing infrastructure to undue strain, which could impact on the continuity of housing delivery. We would like to take the opportunity to restate one of our responses to the Princes Risborough Town Plan consultation and the Wycombe District Local Plan consultation, namely that growth in the town will lead to a requirement for enhanced facilities at the railway station. This includes but is not limited to facilities such as a café, waiting shelters, and expanded car parking and some developer funding should be secured for this purpose.

While our existing franchise is due to expire prior to the main period of housing delivery, it is preferable to improve infrastructure in anticipation of growth rather than after and we are open to ongoing engagement on this issue. We note that Appendix 4 of the SPD identifies £2,076,990 of S106 contributions for Relief Road-associated improvements to the railway site but is not obvious from the SPD that developer contributions are being earmarked for some of the necessary enhancements to the station's facilities needed to meet the demands of growth. We would appreciate confirmation on this point, and are willing to engage further on the need for improvements to station facilities and the case for securing developer contributions for this purpose.

We note that two grade-separated pedestrian crossings of the railway are considered essential, with an underpass from the expansion area to Wades Park (required in 2024/25 at the time of the proposed ramp-up in housing delivery) and a stepped footbridge north of Monks Risborough Station. We welcome the passive provision for future double-tracking included in the SPD section on these two railway crossings.

We note that the proposed new scheduled bus service through the main Expansion Area is required at the beginning of Phase 3 (2027/28, around 1,200 home completions) phased for introduction at around the time the sections of the relief road within the Expansion Area are completed. This bus will serve key destinations including the railway station and in our view it is vital that some sort of public transport service is introduced between the Expansion Area and main station as early as possible. In the interim we note with interest the potential use of S106 contributions for app-based, demand-responsive transport services such as that currently offered by ArrivaClick.

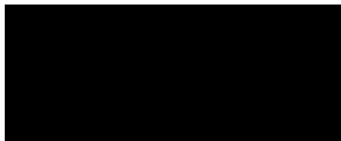
Whatever the solution, it is critical that sustainable transport options to the railway station are introduced in a timely fashion to embed sustainable travel habits in the inhabitants of the Expansion Area.

On a related basis, we welcome the provision of new quality walking and cycling routes between the development areas and the station. As the SPD notes, the relatively flat topography of the town and the expansion area lends itself to opportunities for active travel. We are very keen to engage in further discussions on how Princes Risborough Station in particular can be improved to become a better multi-modal transport hub in the future.

#### **4. Summary**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Princes Risborough Supplementary planning Document consultation. We welcome any further questions or clarifications you might have about our response.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of William Knighton.

**William Knighton**