

Statement of case by Councillor George Derbyshire against the Croxley Rail Link Order

1. I oppose the Order because it is predicated on the withdrawal of passenger service on the Croxley/Watford Met section of the line and the closure of the existing Watford Met station. I view this proposed closure as a serious flaw in the overall case for the Croxley Rail Link which I would otherwise welcome as an important improvement in the public transport infrastructure of South West Hertfordshire.

2. Impact of preferred scheme

2.1. Para 17.3 of the Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) concedes that there will be “some worsening of access to rail for a small number of households in the Cassiobury Park area”. This statement seriously understates the impact of the proposed closure.

2.2. The seriousness of the impact is shown by the response to a survey Councillor Jeffree and I undertook of local residents view on the closure proposals. We received 139 signed responses from local residents objecting to the proposed closure. These we have handed over to London Travel/Watch as part of the London Underground’s formal consultation on the proposed withdrawal of service and station closure. We have been informed that London Travel/Watch received a further 80+ objections direct from local residents. We are informed that is a very high response rate and because of this London Travel/Watch have decided to hold a Public Hearing into the proposed closure.

2.3. The feedback of resident’s responses to the proposed closure

2.4. demonstrates that the MSBC minimises the worsening of access to public transport for both local residents and for incoming users as detailed below. See responses to on-line petition “Save Watford Met” organised by Mr Lester Wagman of 18 Shepherds Road, Watford, WD18 7HX at Appendix 1.

2.5. A lot of the user data analysed in the MSBC was collected by consultants in 2009. Since then there have been major development in the areas of Watford |met which have had an impact on passenger numbers using the station but are nowhere mentioned in the MSBC. These are:

2.5.1. The concentration of the teaching and learning of West Herts College in a new facility on Hempstead Road behind Town Hall. The college services students not only from Watford but also from North-West London and West Hertfordshire. Many of these access the college via the Met line to Watford Met. Their journey times will be significantly increased if they have to go to Watford junction or the new Ascot Road station instead.

2.5.2. In September 2011 the newly refurbished Colosseum entertainment venue opened for business. It is already establishing itself as a major venue with a regular programme of concerts and light entertainment events. This venue is

attracting an audience not only from Watford but from across the wider catchment area, many using the met line service to Watford Met. It would appear that this is another recent development not taken into account in the MSBC analysis.

3. Options considered

- 3.1. The MSBC concluded that most benefit would be gained from the CRL Scheme if it included an Aylesbury to Watford service. This option was ultimately rejected (MSBC 7.14) on grounds of “greater operating costs, delivery complexity and risk than the basic option”.
- 3.2. In my view this decision is very short-sighted and fails to maximise the economic and social benefits of providing residents of the Aylesbury/Watford corridor with good rail access to Watford. The economic benefit to Watford of such a link is clear (see John Lewis/Harlequin evidence given in the MSBC). The social benefit of providing good improved access to Watford General Hospital to the people of West Hertfordshire and South Buckinghamshire is also self-evident.

4. Options for retaining service from Watford Met for re-consideration

- 4.1. In the immediate term Watford Met should be kept open with a service Met service to and from Amersham. This would meet a dual-purpose:

it would provide a service between Watford met and Croxley with a simple same platform change to the CRL and onwards to Baker Street at Croxley;

it would provide a link to Watford General, Watford town centre and Watford junction for the people of West Hertfordshire with a simple same platform change at Croxley.

- 4.2. This proposal deals with the problems raised in the MSBC about platform capacity at Watford junction.
- 4.3. Existing Met line rolling stock could be used for this service.
- 4.4. In the longer term, replacing this service with a heavy rail service to and from Amersham could be explored.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. This is an opportunity to improve the transport infrastructure of South and West Hertfordshire which needs to be grasped. The Watford Met/Amersham link would provide significant economic benefit and maximise the long-term value derived from the CRL capital expenditure. It would also support the retention of a valuable service to and from Watford Met for local residents and others who rely on and value this service.

5.2. I strongly urge reconsideration.

GD 02/05/12

Responses to on-line petition "Save Watford Met" organised by Mr Lester Wagman of 18 Shepherds Road, Watford, WD18 7HX

Whilst I understand the need to provide better transport links for West Watford this should be done in addition to serving Watford Met Line & not to sacrifice our train service in the casual way they seem to be doing. They have not delivered a argument to justify the closure of Watford Met Line Station.

4/3/2012 21:02 [View Responses](#)

The business case is flawed. The impact on journey time would be significant. Not only this I do not believe it will bring faster journey times from London or the North (by the time have waited for a connecting train and spent 10 mins on tube going through Watford). It will also improve congestion on Ricky Rd with people driving to Watford junction rather than adding an extra 20 to 30 mins to their journey time to London (walk, wait for a tube etc etc). It has been proven there is not the demand as that is why the old West Watford rail shut. The economic benefit is not proven and if anything I think it will be to the detriment of the local economy and causing a decline in house prices overall. Additionally, as I think people will end up using Watford Junction (drive there and try to make up the lost time using the fast train), the station will not be able to cope with the extra capacity and will need significant investment. Moreover, it is not good use of tax payer money spending over £100million to link a distance of a mile or 2.

9/2/2012 21:59 [View Responses](#)

I currently use Watford Met station as it is more cost effective than using Watford Junction (zone 1-7 plus £60 a month for parking still works out cheaper than using the overground from Watford Junction with no parking included). I'm surprised this survey is not covering the cost implication this change would have on literally hundreds of commuters. If Watford Met station were to close, the only real option I have would be to use Watford Junction which is a 25 min walk (one way) - parking is not an option at £8 per day!

23/8/2011 9:14 [View Responses](#)

did live in Watford town centre and often used the station - it was always very busy - watford needs more stations

7/8/2011 22:20 [View Responses](#)

This is just another way to make life difficult for people in Watford. Haven't the council made our lives bad enough with all their stupid, pointless and very expensive ideas that no one wants or asked for in the first place without this added to it. The council keep building all these flats for all these people you want living here and making the place an eyesore so taking away one of our travel routes will create even more cars on our already congested roads in Watford. It's funny as I thought the council like to go on about how green it is, this is hardly green is it. Why is this being allowed?

6/8/2011 12:27 [View Responses](#)

Question 6 measures time but in my case it would increase the cost by as much as 30% which is ludicrously as this will force us to use the car more and congest the roads.

28/6/2011 9:06 [View Responses](#)

Closing Watford Met Line Station does not make any sense at all. Surveys should be taken at peak times to see how many people rely on this station to go to and from work/school. Walking to other new proposed stations does not make any sense at all.

27/6/2011 12:07 [View Responses](#)

Do not close Watford Tube. Thousands of commuters from all over Watford use it every day to travel to and from work in central London. Closing it would be a completely retrograde step.

22/6/2011 11:47 [View Responses](#)

CLOSING THE STATION WILL NEGATIVELY EFFECT MEMBERS OF OUR HOUSEHOLD. THE WATFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS WILL ALSO BE SERIOUSLY EFFECTED. IT IS VERY BUSY AROUND HERE IN COMMUTER HOURS WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE USING THE WATFORD UNDERGROUND . THE IMPACT ON THE RICKMANSWORTH ROAD HAS TO BE CONSIDERED. IT ALREADY VERY CONGESTED IN COMMUTER TIMES. THE NEW BUILDING PROJECT AT THE OLD FIRE STATION WILL INCREASE TRAFFIC. KEEPING THE STATION OPEN WILL HELP ALIEVIATE TRAFFIC ON THE RICKMANSWORTH ROAD.

11/6/2011 11:11 [View Responses](#)

As long as prices do not rise (they should fall) it seems sensible. It will hopefully keep local schools for local children. Local buses should really be run by transport for London not the ridiculous lousy expensive excuse for a service we experience and this should be a positive change for all. Lets get more cycle racks (covered as well) into Watford Junction. This could be a great scheme. Perhaps Watford Met could be kept as a branch line offering one train an hour like the st albans abbey line. It is long overdue that this should be done.

10/6/2011 17:20 [View Responses](#)

I live on the north side of Cassiobury Estate and the closure of Watford Met Station would be a disaster for my family. I work at Baker Street in London and take the train every day from Watford straight through to Baker Street which is really convenient for me. My daughter goes to Rickmansworth School and takes the train every day with me to Croxley Station. We drive together to the station and she walks back after school. There is no way she could walk all the way home from Rickmansworth School, its utterly ridiculous. My son goes to Watford Boys and takes the train every friday after school to work at Waitrose in Rickmansworth. He would not be able to get to work if the station closes as the bus service is pitiful. The closure would mean there are substantially more cars on the road (exactly what the goverment say they don't want!) as that would be the only way people could get to work/school. The knock-on effect on traffic congestion would be a disaster. Whoever thinks that the station is not widely used should be there at 8 o'clock in the morning when literally train-loads of boys arrive to go to school at watford boys. Similarly a large number of boys and girls get on the train to go to Ricky School. Why are these people trying to make our lives even more difficult than they already are??

10/6/2011 13:39 [View Responses](#)

The closing of Watford Met Line station will lead to increased traffic congestion, accidents and is totally impractical for many of the students who currently attend WGBS. On some days, boys are so heavily laden with kit required for school that parents will need to take them by car. This is a badly thought out scheme and one where the so called consultation process has tried to disguise the fact that they are planning on closing the station at Watford.

10/6/2011 12:48 [View Responses](#)

If the line from Croxley to Watford is closed, I would be concerned about the potential for LUL to sell the land for further development... I don't feel strongly enough however that I would oppose the closure, pending clarification on the proposed disposal of the LUL land.

9/6/2011 0:19 [View Responses](#)

The croxley link is a great idea! Many more people would be able to access the major businesses, shops and amenities of watford from Watford's west side, neighbouring towns, and North West London if the link went ahead. This link idea is a great idea. And it will give Car users less excuse to drive, which is better for all. Sadly Watford Met station has to close, but luckily one of the proposed new stations is not far away.

7/6/2011 22:25 [View Responses](#)

My son commutes to Rickmansworth School on the Met line. He is already walking 10 mins to Watford Met and then 15mins from Croxley met to school. Closing Watford Met would make him more reliant on parents driving him to school. It would be difficult and more dangerous with heavy books to cycle to school.

5/6/2011 9:59 [View Responses](#)

i am extremely concerned about the closure of the met line, i am willing to do anything possible to prevent the watford met station from closing down.

4/6/2011 2:09 [View Responses](#)

I work in london and watford tube is due to its location witch is 5 min away from my house the prefered and only transport link that i use. A clousure of it would result in an unproportional enlongment of my journey time and in higher costs to travel. It would make it unaffordable to keep living where i live and i`d be forced to find a new home. What would equal a disaster since the place where i live is the best ever financially and socially.

30/5/2011 21:23 [View Responses](#)

One member of our household is disabled (the Met station is close enough to walk to) and would be unable to walk to the new Two Bridges Station or other proposed stations so would have to use a car to get to the new station, therefore adding to the increased environmental impact - and the need to use and park a car for each journey as there are no suitable buses.

30/5/2011 16:00 [View Responses](#)

I can not believe we are in this situation after spending so much money recently spent re-furbishing the Watford Met station and re-doing all the track etc (and the number of weekends the line has been down to do so). I though we were facing times of cuts rather than excessive expense on unrequired services. In addition, one of the key reason we purchased our home was because of ease of access to the met line station so we can go to work - the

thought it may be taken away from us based on nothing more than a whim from the county council is a very scary prospect.

29/5/2011 11:11 [View Responses](#)

Whilst I agree that those crossing Cassiobury Park are a good indicator of the demand for the station, the 1.5 million entries/exits figure is misleading because a sizeable proportion of these people will be simply be able to use the new stations.

24/5/2011 8:47 [View Responses](#)

Why is the Croxley Rail Link Necessary? Watford town centre is served by mainline rail and London Overground already. How will this be funded? If Local/National Govt. have available funds they should improve health/police/roads etc in priority to this. If the rail companies have available funds they should use it to get their network/rolling stock up to an acceptable standard. If the Croxley Rail Link is necessary can Watford Met be kept open as a spur like Chesham?

21/5/2011 14:09 [View Responses](#)

I am very keen for the CRL to take place. It is hugely important that people from surrounding towns have easy access to the regional shopping centre and do not have to rely on their cars. If keeping this station open means the CLR project being scuppered, this is a bad thing.

21/5/2011 9:41 [View Responses](#)

Closing the station means hundreds of school children who use the line needing to cross two major roads during rush-hour to get to school,. Commuters will have their average journey to the station increased. Access to the park, already restricted by permit-parking, will be even more difficult for families with children. Closing the station will increase the number of car journeys. The vital Hospital station has been dropped from the plans.

20/5/2011 18:52 [View Responses](#)

i and other members of my household use the watford met station for regular work commitments in london and surrounding areas. i find it very difficult to use any other station near by due to parking facillities.

20/5/2011 16:43 [View Responses](#)

Don't close it!!!! I'm a health care profession and this station has many links to hospitals on the line and to central London

19/5/2011 21:52 [View Responses](#)

I drive from Northamptonshire every day to Watford station. The effect on my journey time will be to increase some 15+ mins every day and add to the CO2 emmissions.

15/5/2011 14:52 [View Responses](#)

It would be a big blow to my family, Watford and Cassiobury Park. I think it is ridiculous idea and i'm disapointed that the Mayjor and the local MPs think this is a good idea.

12/5/2011 20:17 [View Responses](#)

I think the proposal needs to be thought out very carefully. With so many using the Watford station every day any change made is going to impact a great number of people. The Cassio Metro estate was built with the next door tube station used as a major selling point. We moved to Watford to be next to the tube station as did many of our friends in the estate so closing the station would now leave a very bitter taste in the mouth.

8/5/2011 11:13 [View Responses](#)

There has been very little news about the closure & with the recent Council Elections, I cannot recall that this this has been one of the issues any of the literature has been keen to highlight, or mention the benefits of the changes. This suggests that the parties know this would be something to cause disquiet. I feel cheated & regret not using my votes more wisely.

8/5/2011 8:25 [View Responses](#)

IF this UTTER waste of money is given the green light, then why not leave Watford open as a one stop extension like amersham/chesham. THE OBVIOUS ANSWER TO LINK WATFORD JUNCTION IS TO LET THE BAKERLOO LINE GO FURTHER THEAN HARROW & WEALSTONE. This multi million pound waste of tax payers money is sheer madness.

7/5/2011 15:08 [View Responses](#)

The map covering 97% catchment area for the Met is almost ALL to the North. A better profile map with iso lines on it would help! The frequency of trains over the shared track bed would rocket from 1 every 10 minutes to 1 every 3 - 3.5 minutes. If people are driving to the Met, where do they come from? Will they ADD to the congestion on St. Albans Road?

6/5/2011 12:44 [View Responses](#)

I am a single lady living on the cassio metro eastate and i can not drive to to medical condition,and i use wat st every day to get to work and also to see family and friends in and around the hertfordshire area,PLEASE do not close the st.x

30/4/2011 19:59 [View Responses](#)

I am registered disabled and find diffucult to walk far, I would really want the station not to be close, because this station is very useful for me and my members of my household, it only takes me 2 minutes walk to get there. Also my brother always uses this station everyday for travelling to get to his school in rickmansworth`

29/4/2011 22:05 [View Responses](#)

I use Watford Met every day to travel to work. Both my children use Watford Met everyday to travel to school. It's closure would be disatrous for us as we would have no alternative. It would mean many more extra car journey's for all sorts of people. Also with the new West Herts College which has just been built with absolutely no parking facilities, many, many students use Watford Met for transport. The reason why the college was built without parking facilities was to encourage the use of public transport and now there is a proposal to shut the nearest train station!?. How does that make any sense?

8/3/2011 23:12 [View Responses](#)

This is a decision must not be made. Too many people would be inconvenienced. If services were increased giving the residents of watford a better service and people who visit watford would find it more convenient, then I could see why the other link is being considered but the Watford Met Station is a vital part of this increase in services, surely. It is NOT going to help the people of watford only cause more inconvenience and strain in you trying to deter people using their cars. In turn causing more detriment to all that is what you are trying to do in encouraging the public to do in the first place, which is to use public transport instead.

18/2/2011 19:00 [View Responses](#)

Watford metropolitan line station is a necessity for my family and I, it would be disaster for it to close

16/2/2011 22:51 [View Responses](#)

It's absolutely ridiculous! Any political figure ignorant enough to carry this out would be swiftly removed from office by the voters.

16/2/2011 22:12 [View Responses](#)