



THE WINDSOR LINK RAILWAY

An integrated transport plan for Windsor and the surrounding region, addressing a range of national and local transport and social issues

WINDSOR RESIDENTS' SURVEY RESULTS

27 October 2013

Abstract

The Windsor Link Railway (WLR) is the first privately-led new railway for over 100 years. Phase 1 connects the two existing train lines in Windsor via a tunnel. The proposed new services would then deliver significantly reduced journey times from Windsor to London and around the region. Journey times to and from other borough towns, including Maidenhead and Ascot, would also be significantly reduced.

The scheme facilitates (but does not require) improvements to the riverside area of Windsor. This could include enlarging Alexandra Gardens, more parking or more homes – or a mixture of all three.

The survey has shown overwhelming support for this proposal from the residents of Windsor. 95% of Windsor residents agreed that the phase 1 train services are important to Windsor and 92% petitioned the council to engage actively. Residents also supported the improvements to the riverside area and showed a mature attitude to disruption during construction.

Over 2,500 survey cards were delivered to central Windsor. The high response rate gave a 90% statistical confidence that the results were a fair reflection of resident opinion.

CONTENTS

About the Windsor Link Railway.....	3
Phase 1.....	3
Future Phases.....	5
The Company.....	5
Key Advantages.....	6
Survey Method.....	7
Geographic distribution.....	7
Representativeness.....	8
Verification.....	10
Survey Results.....	11
Question 1: Phase 1.....	11
Question 2: Phase 2.....	12
Question 3: Statement testing.....	12
Question 4: Disruption.....	13
Question 5: Premium riverside homes.....	14
Question 6: Alexandra Gardens.....	15
Question 7: Petition.....	16

ABOUT THE WINDSOR LINK RAILWAY

Phase 1

Phase 1 of the Windsor Link Railway links the two existing, dead-end lines into Windsor with a new through line in a tunnel and a new station to replace the existing two.

The tunnel would be from the existing railway viaduct, west of Goswell Road, and then turning left to pass under Thames Street, behind the theatre, before joining the line to Datchet just after Queen Victoria's waiting room, west of the existing Riverside station.

Both existing station buildings would be retained and restored, but given new uses. It is also envisaged that the viaduct will be mostly retained, except where the new alignment departs from the existing.

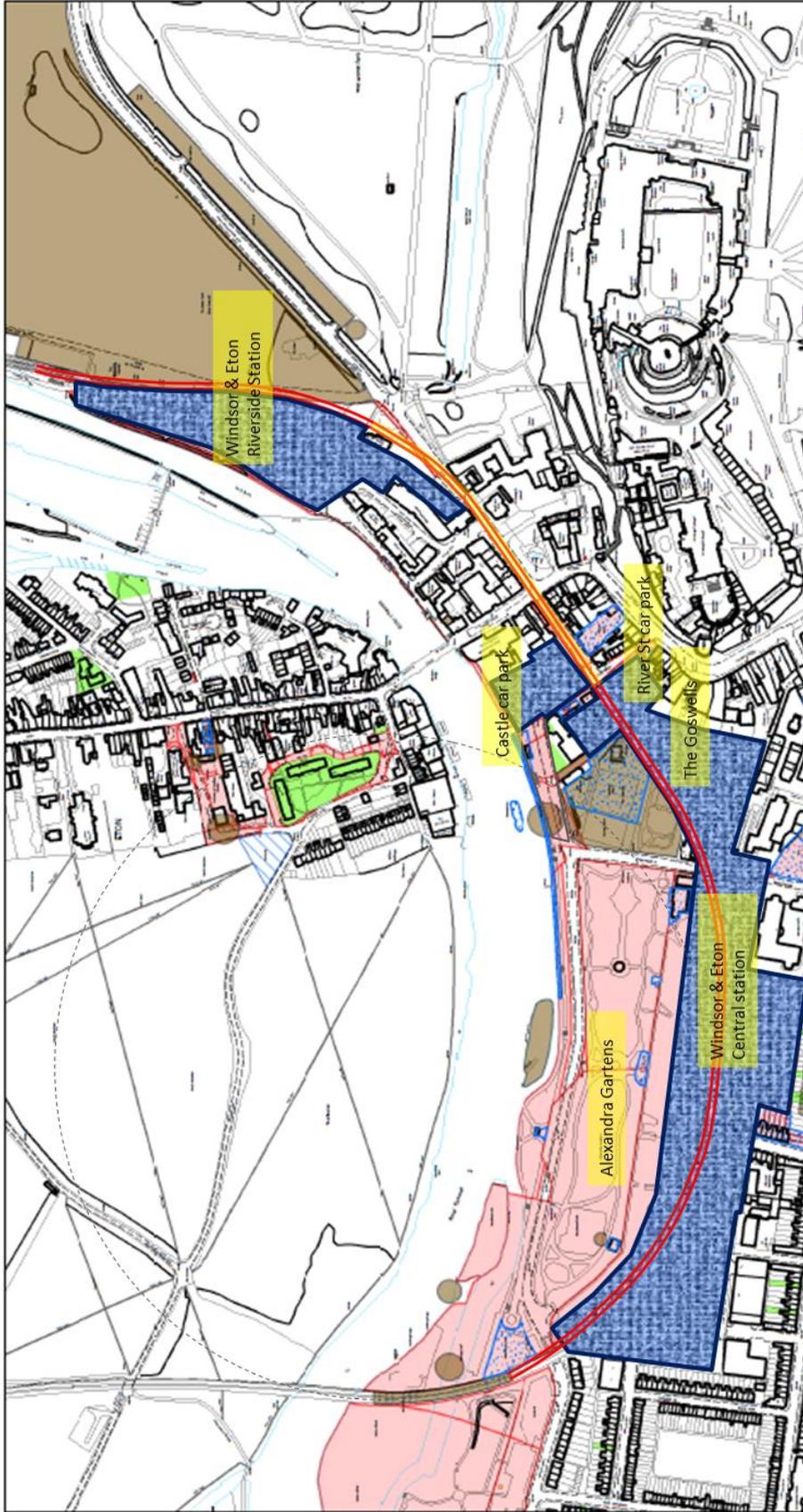
The plan below shows a potential new rail alignment in Windsor together with the areas in Windsor that could be improved as a result of the new railway. N.B. The railway has an independent business case (as assessed by Network Rail). Therefore **no development is required for the railway**; it merely facilitates any development or improvements that WLR would wish to design in conjunction with local people, the council and other stakeholders.

There would clearly be some disruption during construction. However, the site is advantageous in that most of it is away from residential areas. The tunnel under Thames Avenue could also use special construction techniques to minimise disturbance. This could either be by a special cut-n-cover method or bored. These options have been independently assessed as having civil engineering costs of £76 and £124 million respectively. These methods have different pros and cons and the preferred option would be selected in consultation with local stakeholders.

Phase 1 has been formally supported by Network Rail and South-West Trains, with together form an alliance for train services in this region. Jim Morgan, the Alliance Infrastructure Director, said, "I am pleased to be able to confirm that the Windsor Link project has been reviewed by both Network Rail and the South Western Railway and we have concluded that the proposals would provide a worthwhile addition to the rail network."

The project has been supported by the Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce, who wrote a letter signed by over 100 local businesses, to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Most recently, the Central Windsor Neighbourhood plan steering group, which included representatives from the Conservatives, LibDems, resident association, UKIP and the W&ES, voted to support the scheme in principle.



-  New rail alignment
-  Suggested improvement areas
-  Tunnel (300m long)

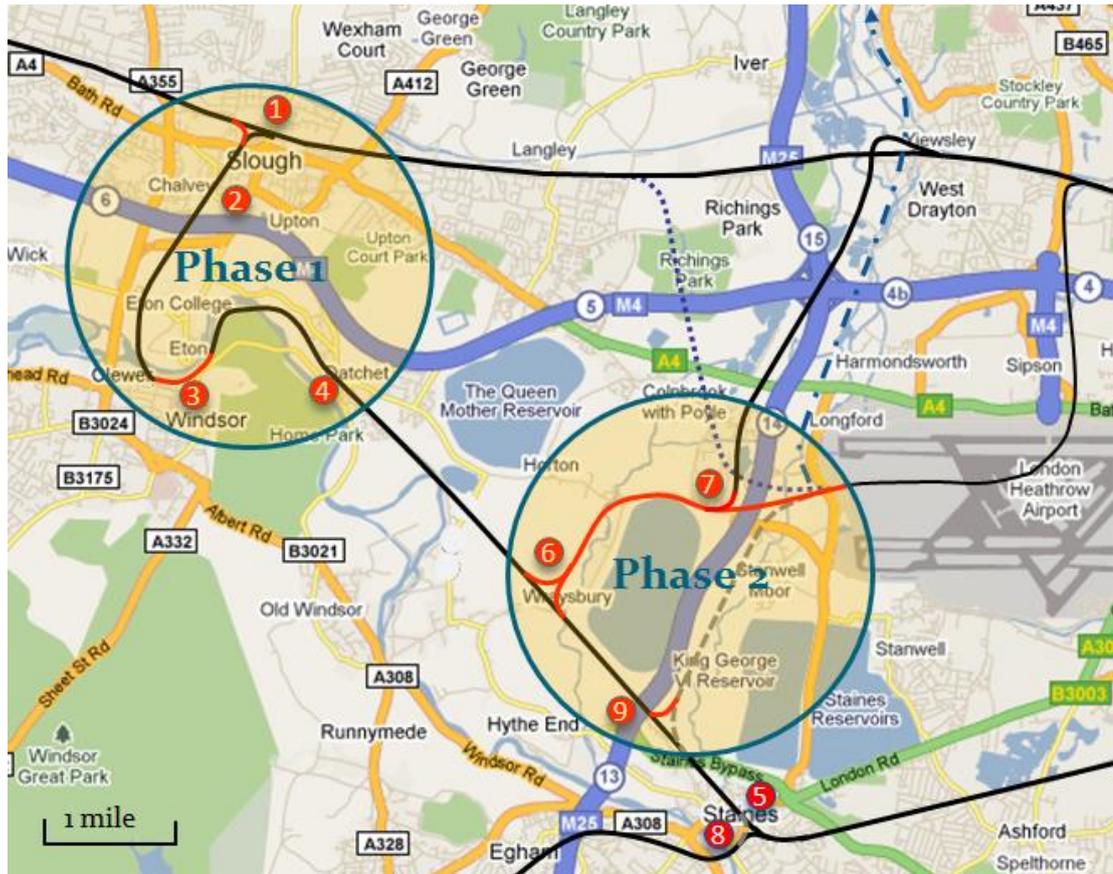


This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Licence Number 100018817, 2009.

Future Phases

Future phases of the Windsor Link Railway will connect other missing links in the regional network. This includes, for example, connecting Heathrow to the west, allowing Crossrail to be easily extended to both Windsor and Ascot, or re-opening the line between Maidenhead and High Wycombe (which has already been reserved in the Wycombe Local Plan).

The map below shows how the first two phases (shown in red) would link with the existing rail network (in black).



The Company

The Windsor Link Railway (WLR) is the first privately-led new railway for over 100 years.

It is a for-profit company but it is not just about profit; its social aims include preserving our heritage, improving our environment, improving standards of living for local residents, increasing social mobility and creating economic growth and employment.

The company is currently working on forming a joint venture that will bring various stakeholders together, working towards a joint-venture structure involving shareholdings from both the public and private sectors.

Key Advantages

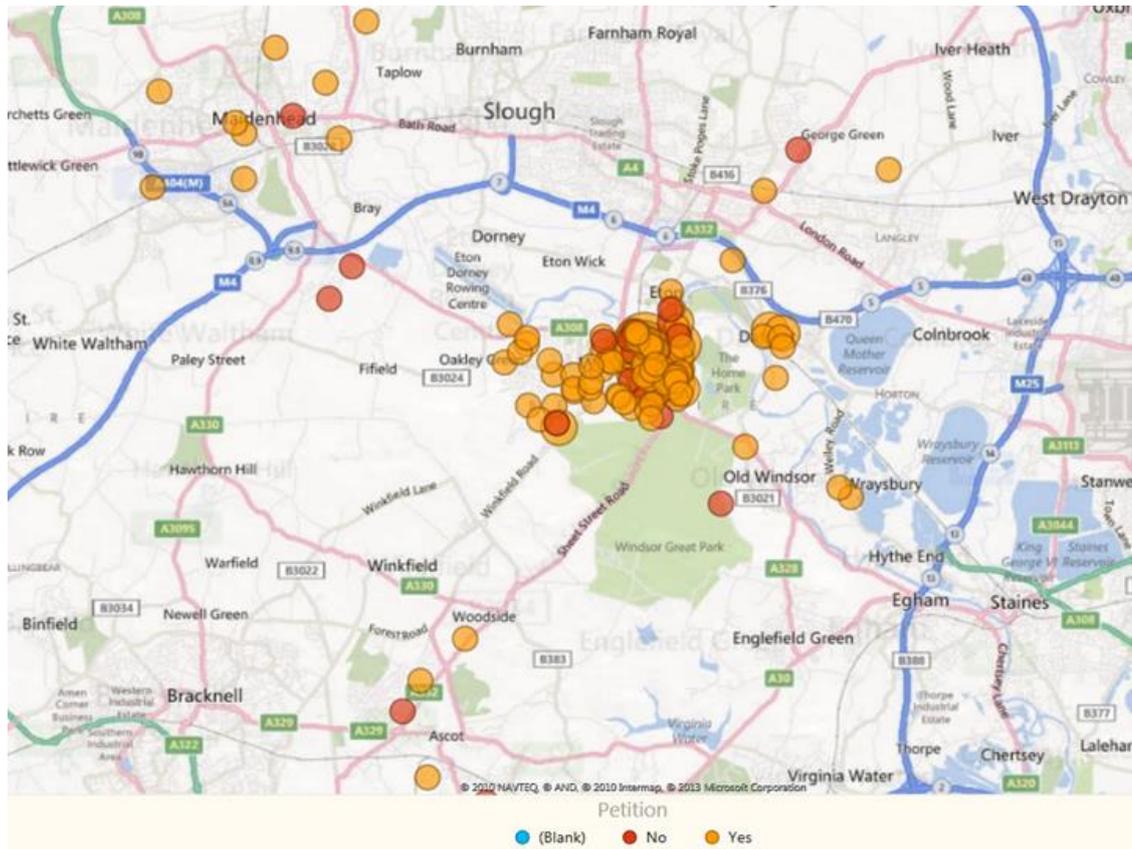
- **Faster and more frequent trains:** Trains services are proposed that would double the frequency of trains from Windsor to Waterloo, including a new fast service reducing average journey time by an estimated 20 minutes (15 minutes from reduced waiting time and 5-10 from a faster service). More frequent trains to Slough would also reduce average journey times to London and Maidenhead by a similar amount. This would result in significant reductions in journey times for thousands of local people every day. The increase in train capacity would also ensure that there would be more seats for residents joining trains. Train services are important Windsor residents as such a large proportion commute this way, a trend which is likely to accelerate with increasing pressure on the roads and little practical opportunities for expanding them.
- **Address Windsor's chronic traffic and parking problems:** the WLR includes a new park-n-ride facility. Instead of building on Green Belt near Eton, it proposes a new location north of the M4 (on the site of the current tip) for a transport interchange. Better train services into Windsor would also reduce the requirement for more roads whilst still enabling economic growth. Furthermore, the scheme creates the opportunity for hundreds of additional parking spaces right in the centre of Windsor, which are desperately needed to support the shops.
- **Coping with an increased population:** The ward of Castle Without in central Windsor, has increased by 12.5% in the last ten years, according to the latest census. This goes some way to explaining why parking as well as road and rail links are under such pressure. The Windsor Link Railway does not require any housing development to fund it, because the railway has an independent business case (which has been assessed by Network Rail as likely to be positive). However, should residents via the neighbourhood plan deem that more housing is necessary, it clearly creates an opportunity to do this in a more structured way than if left to individual landowners. Moreover, it makes any such development more sustainable by at the same time improving access and taking pressure off the Green Belt.
- **Better community facilities:** The new station facility in Windsor will also create an opportunity for better community and shopping facilities, including attracting an 'anchor store' such as John Lewis back to the town, riverside cafes, much needed additional hotel capacity or even a cinema.

There are many other benefits; the above is just a sample. However, it is WLR's desire that these should be worked-out in conjunction with local people.

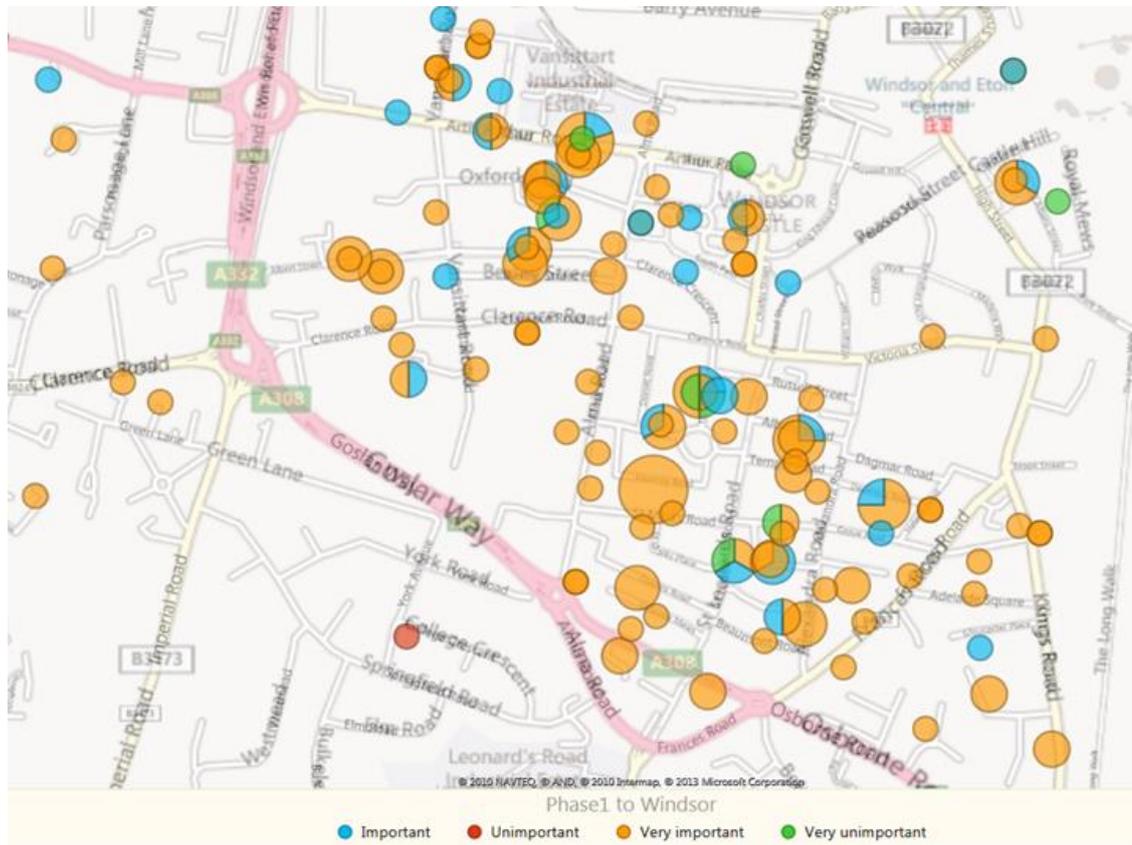
SURVEY METHOD

Geographic distribution

A geographical representation of the location of petitioners is illustrated below.



Zooming in to the central Windsor area, this time showing the answers to question 1, gives the following:



The survey targeted the centre of Windsor (the Castle Without ward) as this is the area most affected by the proposals, both positively in terms of new rail services and improvements to the riverside environment as well as negatively, e.g. from disruption during construction.

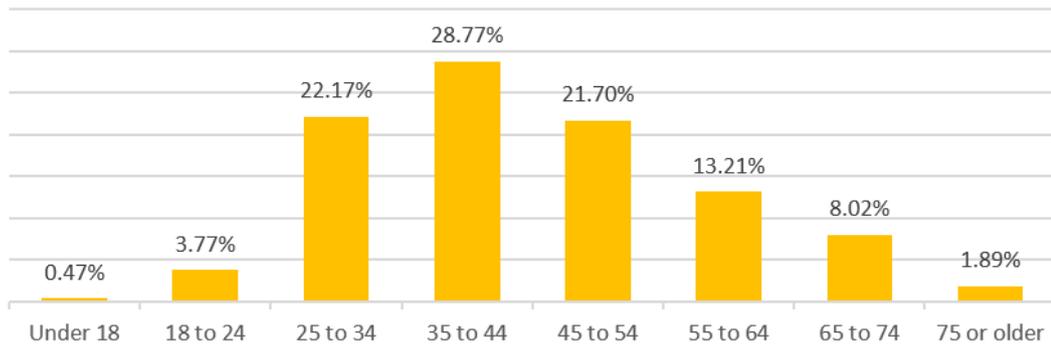
Representativeness

Residents were invited to participate by a post card delivered to 2,500 addresses between 16 March and 2 April 2013. The survey was also promoted via Facebook and local restaurants as well as the RBWM website. The online survey was open from 3 March to 9 April 2013.

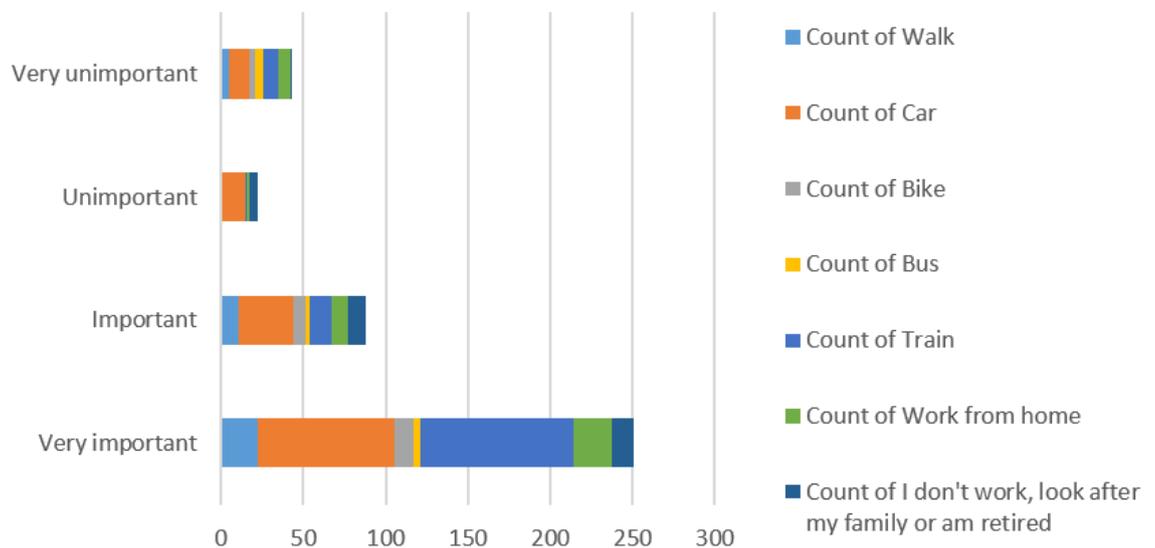
325 responses were received in total of which 285 were completed. This included 26 hardcopy returns, where residents could return the postcard indicating their support.

The population of the Castle Without ward is about 5,000, according to the latest census data, and as such the survey is a statistically significant sample of the target audience with a $\pm 10\%$ margin of error at 90% confidence.

The survey was also tested for representativeness by age and by method of going to work. The ages of respondents broke down as follows.



The mode of commute (that is, method of travelling to work) of respondents was as below. There was no statistically significant difference in replies according to this answer, as can be seen from the chart below. Car users, for example, gave similar answers to train users.



The survey was also tested for geographical representativeness. Responses were evenly spread over the residential areas of central Windsor and the surrounds. The slider graphic above illustrates both petition responses across the borough and answers to question 1 in central Windsor.

The rate of positive responses was slightly higher for valid respondents compared with that for all respondents (including those who didn't complete the survey or gave fake post codes etc.) For example, completed valid surveys saying phase 1 was important for Windsor was 95% but only 93% for valid respondents as a whole and 90% for all respondents. At first glance, this may seem to imply that people living outside of Windsor are less supportive of the railway than those living in the town. This is counter-intuitive as any disadvantages (e.g. from building works) would be entirely for Windsor whereas there would be only benefits for those travelling through on additional services. A possible explanation is that people outside Windsor are jealous of the potential improvements and have thus been somewhat ungenerous in their

responses. However, a better explanation would appear to be that this is simply sample bias. That is, the returns from outside Windsor are not statistically significant and are thus showing bias which would disappear if a representative sample size were collected. This likely also applies to respondents who didn't complete the survey or who provided false verification information, fake post codes etc. For this reason, only validated, completed responses in the target area are counted in the results unless otherwise stated.

Verification

In accordance with the data protection policy of the survey, the source data (including names and addresses of all validated responses) are available to RBWM should they wish to verify the responses to this survey.

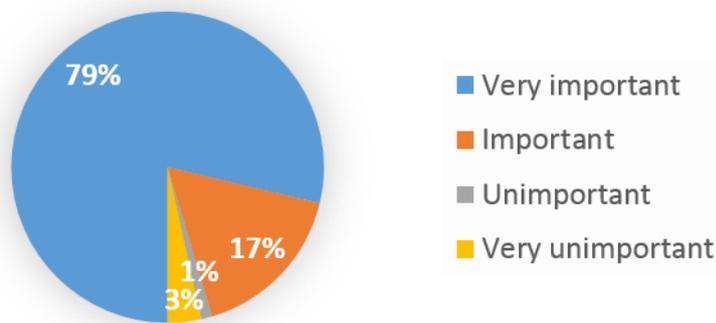
The redacted source data (excluding personally identifiable information) is available on request to any interested party.

SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the survey were as follows.

Question 1: Phase 1

The first question asked: *The Windsor Link Railway proposes more frequent services to London (at least every quarter hour as opposed to half-hourly currently) and faster trains (taking up to 20 minutes off your journey time to London). How important do you think this is?*



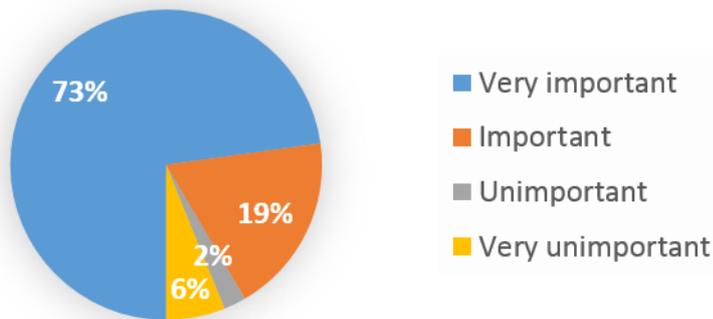
95% of Windsor and Eton residents (as defined by the SL4 postcode) responded that this was important (17%) or very important (79%) to Windsor.*

This is a slightly higher proportion of residents who thought it was important to themselves personally (84%), suggesting that it recognised even by people who do not use the trains that all residents benefit from improved transport links.

*The important and very important responses add up to 96% (rather than the 95% stated above) due to rounding.

Question 2: Phase 2

The second question asked: *The Windsor Link Railway proposes direct trains to Heathrow from Windsor and via Windsor from the west. How important is this?*



89% of residents thought this was important to Windsor and 81% to them personally. This is a slightly smaller proportion of residents that thought better links to London were important. This fits with market research for passenger revenue forecasts conducted by WLR. It is also a message for politicians who perhaps sometimes focus too much on the glamour of connecting to Heathrow and not enough on supporting people's day-to-day travel needs.

Question 3: Statement testing

Statement	Response
<i>Better trains add value to my property and that's a good thing</i>	93% agreed
<i>I would prefer Windsor to be quieter rather than busier</i>	61% disagreed
<i>Businesses and shops in Windsor need better parking and transport links to survive here</i>	89% agreed
<i>Better trains aren't important as people have cars or can use taxis</i>	92% disagreed
<i>New train services are better funded privately rather than by the taxpayer</i>	54% agreed
<i>Windsor needs a park-n-ride facility near the M4 for shoppers and visitors</i>	78% agreed

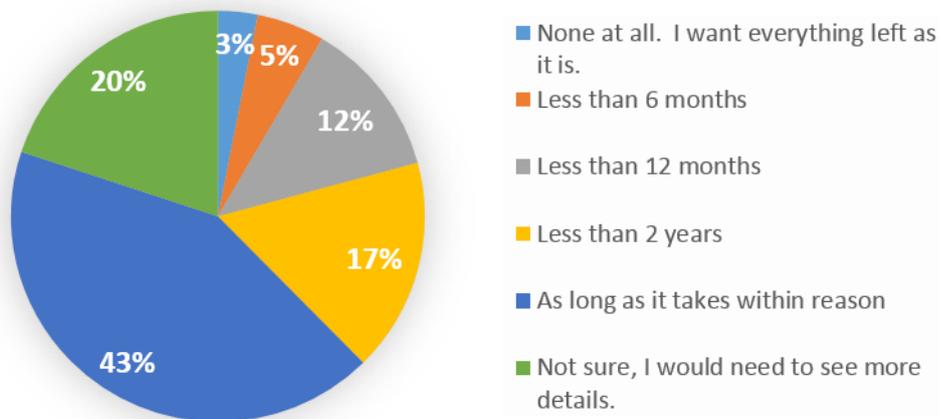
The above statements with about 90% agreeing or disagreeing are unsurprising and correlate with the responses to the first two questions.

More interesting is the (slight majority) support for a privately run railway even though no major political party has been promoting this nationally. Also, a politically hot potato locally is the idea of a park-n-ride. These results are again principally for central Windsor and do not reflect the strong opposition to previous proposals for a park-n-ride on Eton Meadows. However, the WLR neatly side-steps this problem as it proposes a park-n-ride in Chalvey on the site of the current tip, thereby protecting the Green Belt whilst still reducing car traffic into Windsor.

Six respondents using the free text response box complained that the statements above were loaded or leading people to supporting the scheme. However, in every case such respondents had already made their opinions clear in their answers to preceding two questions. These comments may stem from a misunderstanding of this third question, the purpose of which was to assess agreement of otherwise with political opinions rather than to measure overall support for the scheme's first two phases, which was the purpose of the first two questions.

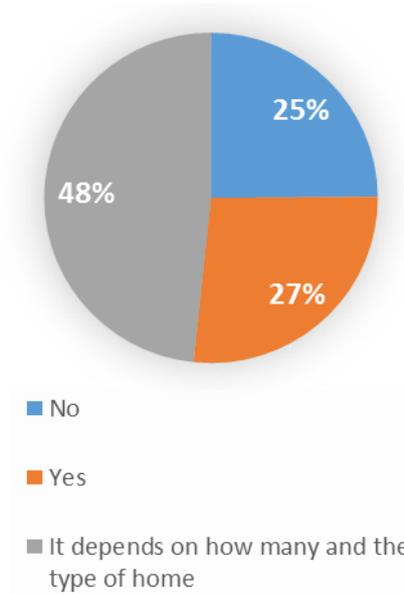
Question 4: Disruption

Obviously, major improvements to transport infrastructure cause disruption whilst they are built. How much disruption do you think the benefits that the new rail links, riverside landscape improvements and parking, as proposed by the Windsor Link Railway, would be worth to Windsor?



Only 8% would tolerate only 6 months or less disruption, with almost three-quarters accepting a year's disruption, which is more than the new rail line is expected to cause. The most popular answer was 'as long as it takes within reason' (43%).

Question 5: Premium riverside homes



The Windsor Link Railway could attract new residents to Windsor and make it possible to accommodate some premium homes by the river. Do you think this would be appropriate?

75% of residents thought that this could be acceptable in principle, responding either yes (25%) or 'it depends on how many and the type of home' (46%).

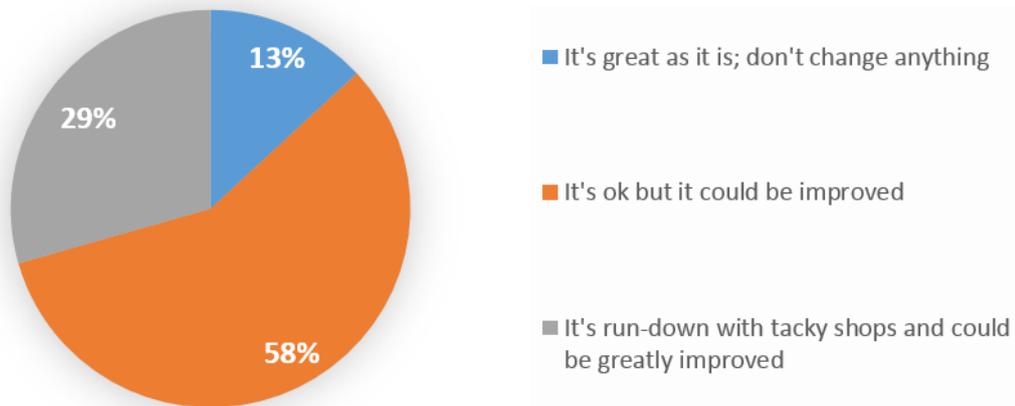
This is a surprisingly positive response for such a vague question about development in such a sensitive area. It suggests that people recognise that there are pressures on housing and that subject to an acceptable design and there not being over-development a large majority would accept this.

A few respondents (4 or 1%) used the comment box to suggest that this was the only reason for proposing the railway. The truth is that some development around the riverside area is inevitable with or without the railway and it would be better for residents if any profits from this could be invested in better transport links to support additional homes, as well as existing ones, and that any such development is properly planned rather than being piecemeal.

A further ten respondents (3%) thought that more affordable homes should be provided. Some also said that the Green Belt should not be built on. As one of the advantages of the WLR is protecting the Green Belt by enabling new housing on brownfield sites in Chalvey and elsewhere it increases the supply of affordable homes, so these responses suggest that a broad consensus is possible.

Question 6: Alexandra Gardens

What's your opinion of the riverside area of Windsor and Alexandra Gardens?

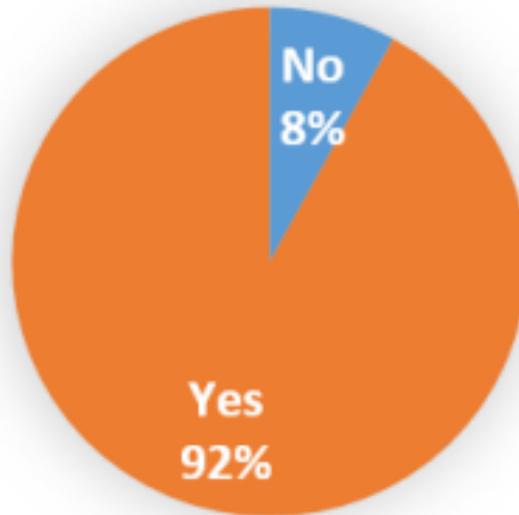


Just 13% of residents thought that the riverside area was great as it is.

A majority (58%) thought that area could be improved and a shockingly high proportion (29%) thought it was run-down with tacky shops. There were positive comments about the new Jubilee fountain but respondents clearly wanted more improvements like this.

Question 7: Petition

I petition the local council to look actively at ideas for improving the riverside area, parking and transport in Windsor, including those of the Windsor Link Railway Ltd, on behalf of local residents.



92% of valid respondents to the online petition responded positively.

Total petition positive responses as at 27 October 2013 stand at 424, received as follows:

	Online	Paper	Total
Initial petition	-	109	109
By survey up to closing date	258	26	284
Subsequently received	29	2	31
TOTAL	287	137	424