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Windsor Link Railway

Presentation to the wider Windsor Neighbourhood Plan

16 September 2014

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Train services

Train services are great in Windsor because we've got two stations. Right?

	Ascot	Slough	Staines	Windsor
Terminal stations directly accessible	Reading, Waterloo, Guildford	Henley, Bourne End, Reading, Oxford/Banbury, Oxford/Worcester, Paddington, Windsor	Reading, Waterloo, Weybridge, Windsor	Slough, Waterloo
Routes	3	7	4	2
Trains per hour	8	19	14	5
Direct destinations	22	39	50	14
Seats per hour	4,000	5,500	7,000	2,400

Wrong. Windsor has the worst services of any nearby town!

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Won't things get better with Crossrail?

Windsor to London Paddington (minutes)	Today	With Crossrail
Average journey time	**51**	**46**
Best case journey time	**28**	**28**
Worst case journey time (90%)	**72**	**63**
Variability	**44**	**35**

A bit. 10% faster on average, 20% less variable

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Won't WRAtH improve matters?

Windsor to Heathrow (min)	Today by car	Today by bus (route 77)	By train with WRAtH
Average journey time (door-to-door)	**25**	**64**	**38**
Best case journey time	**13**	**36**	**23**
Worst case journey time (90%)	**30**	**96**	**54**
Variability	**17**	**60**	**41**
Cost	**£3-£18**	**£8.50**	**£10?**

Better than the bus but…

It will still be faster, more reliable by car (and cheaper if you share)

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The ‘do nothing option’

- Windsor’s train services are dramatically worse than they were 20 years ago, up to 50% slower. It is likely this trend will continue unless addressed.
- Slots to Waterloo are sought-after and may be lost to a competing town or Heathrow. (Airtrack, for example, proposed that Windsor would lose direct services)
- Slough council has suggested closing the Windsor branch and replacing it with a tram

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The problems in Windsor

- Massively increased population (mostly surrounding region)
- Traffic jams so bad at times the viability of Windsor shopping has been threatened (alleviated by trials by not solved)
- Desperate shortage of parking and road space. Many parking schemes proposed over previous decades
- New roads politically undeliverable (Green Belt etc)
- Car use growing as proportion of visitors
- Lack of employment in town putting further pressure on transport and the danger of becoming a dormitory town

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Why haven't these things already been addressed?

- Rail services to Windsor more unprofitable than average so more likely to be down- than up-graded
- No significant improvement in roads since M25 was built. Local roads politically very difficult to deliver
- Many car parking schemes proposed over recent decades
- Other places have been better at lobbying for themselves
  - WRAtH is a scheme mostly for Slough and the west
  - Crossrail is for London
  - Relative success of Windsor (especially compared with Maidenhead) has meant Windsor neglected.
- Obsession with Heathrow when biggest issue for most residents is their less glamourous daily commute
- No over-aching plan and local political boundaries

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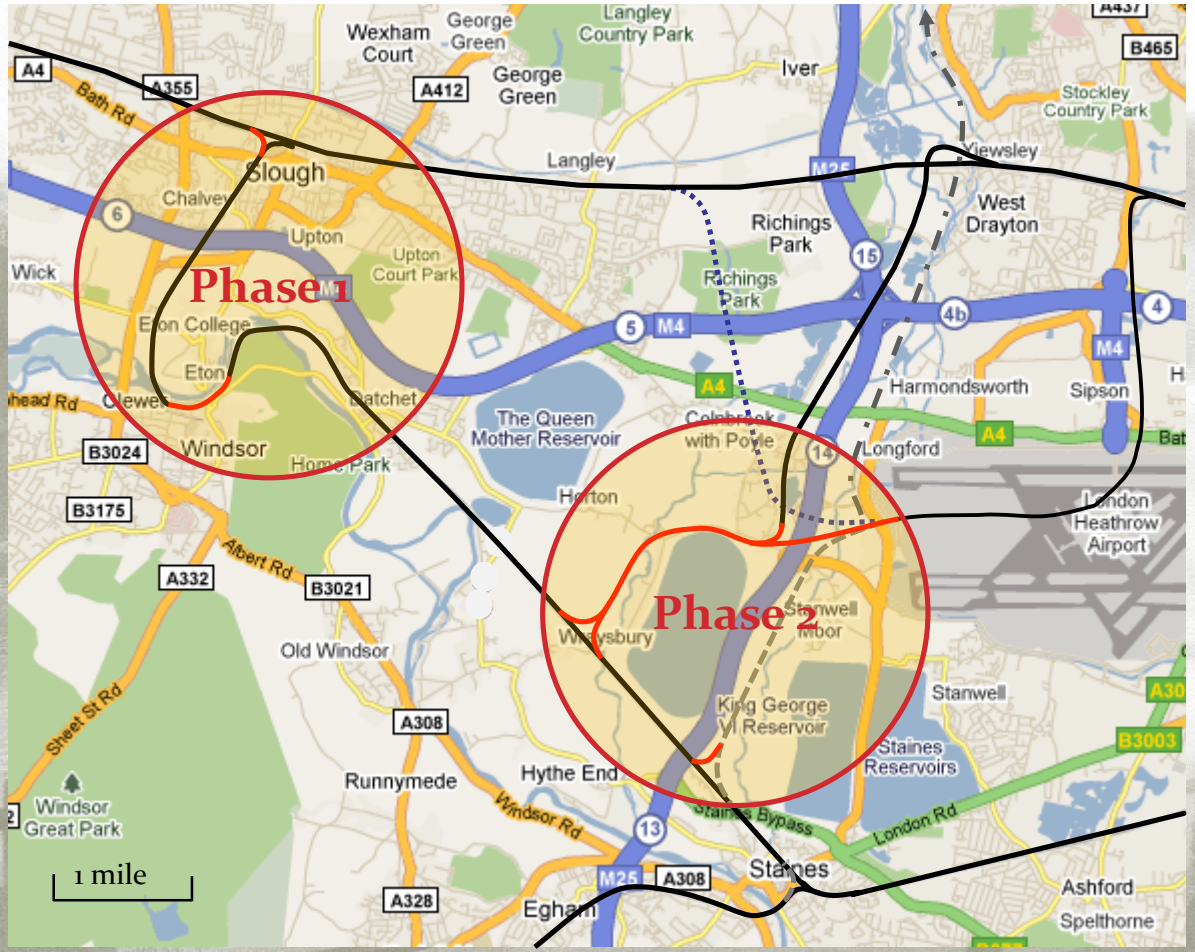
The WLR proposal



- Existing railway
- AirLite proposal
  - led by Wandsworth BC
- WRATH proposal
  - led by Slough BC
- AirLite+ proposal
  - led by WLR

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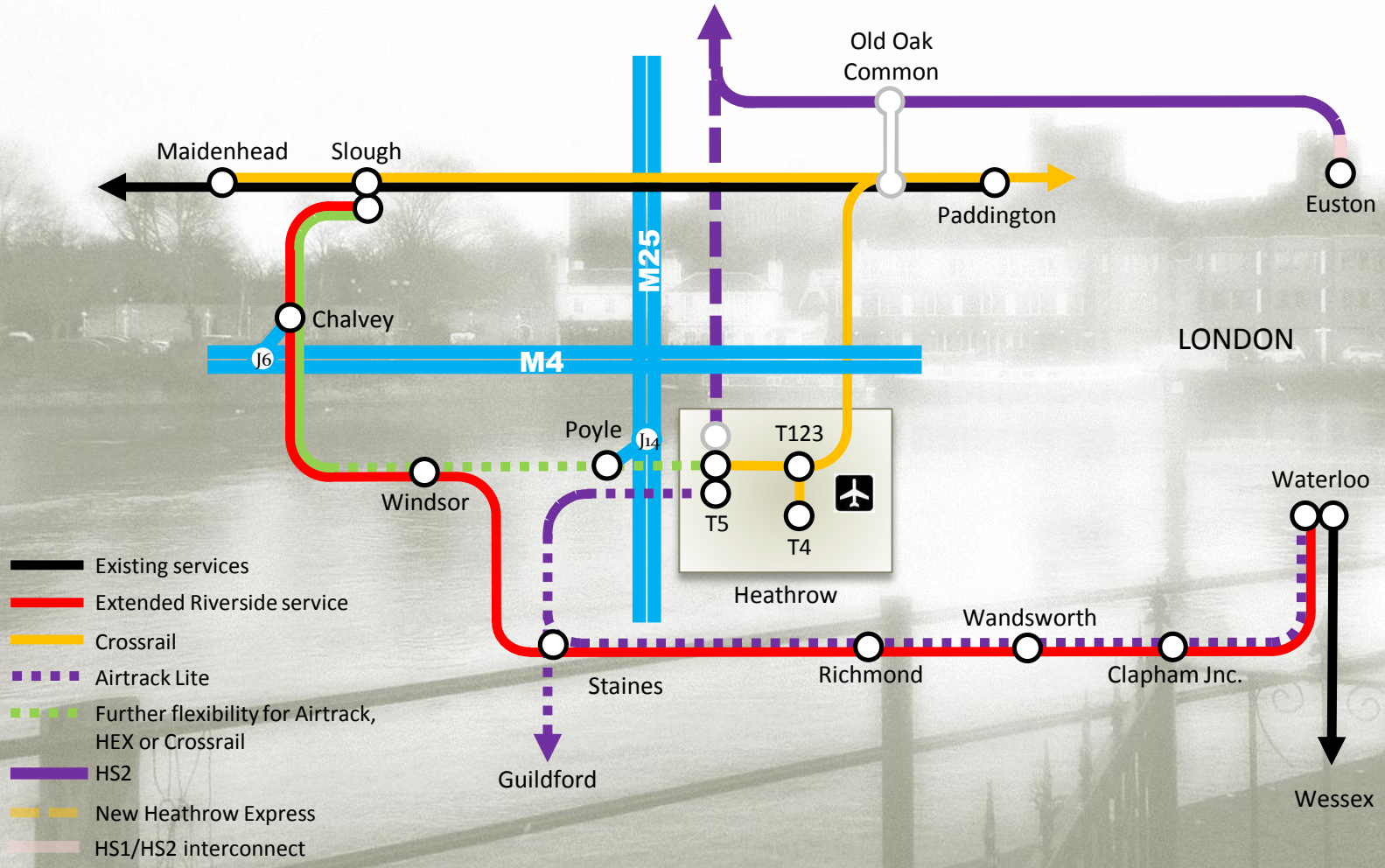
Train services



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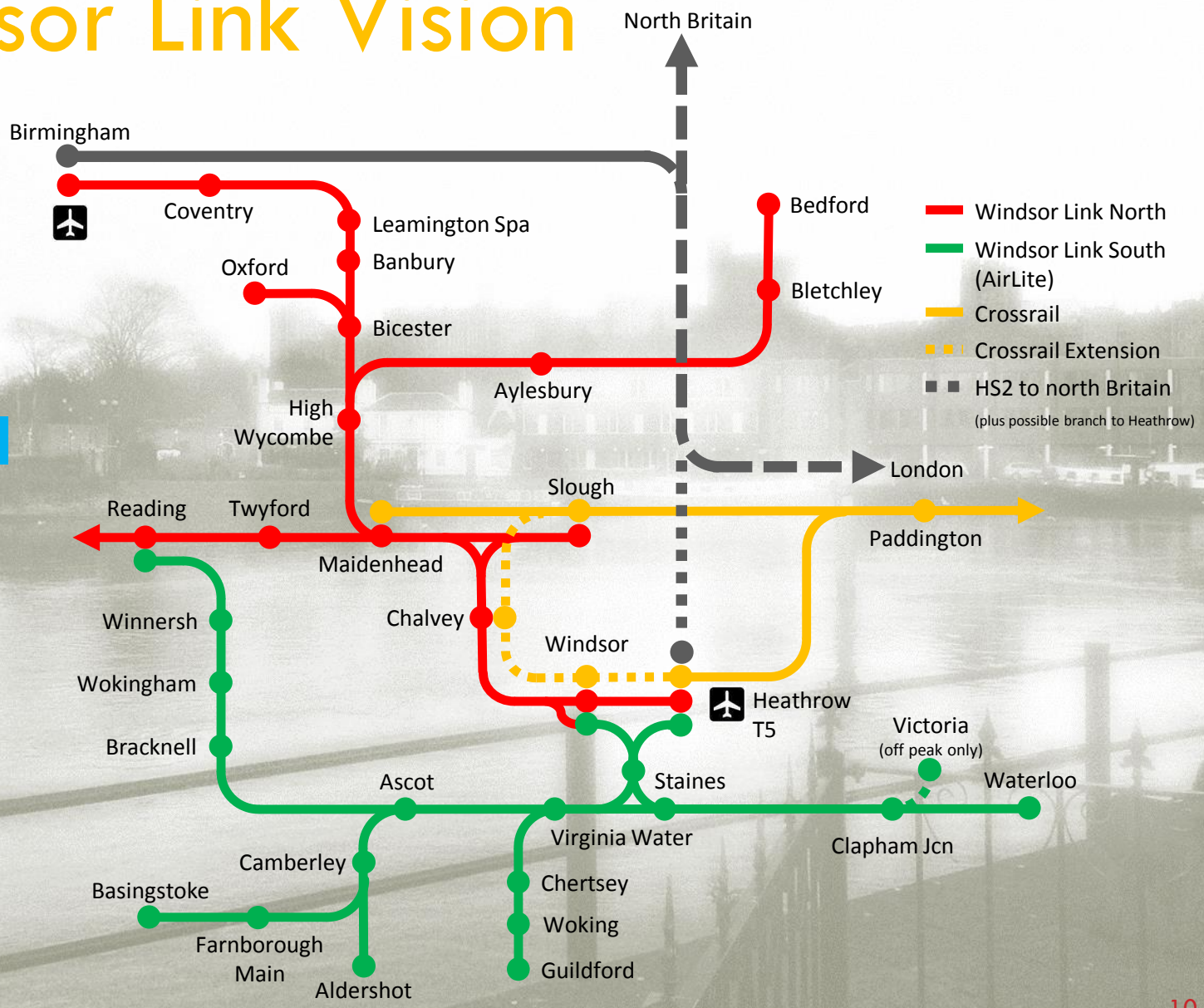
Windsor Link Vision

- A schematic showing a better connected region, establishing better orbital rail links – the beginnings of an **M25 railway**
- Now that HS2 is going ahead, the green network to the south dramatically improves the return on investment by connecting millions more people to the north and taking up to 2 hours more off their journeys in addition that saved by HS2.



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But can we build it?

- Vertical and horizontal geometry
- Design standards
- Listed structures
- Properties and businesses
- Utilities
- Super-sensitive location
- Environmental aspects

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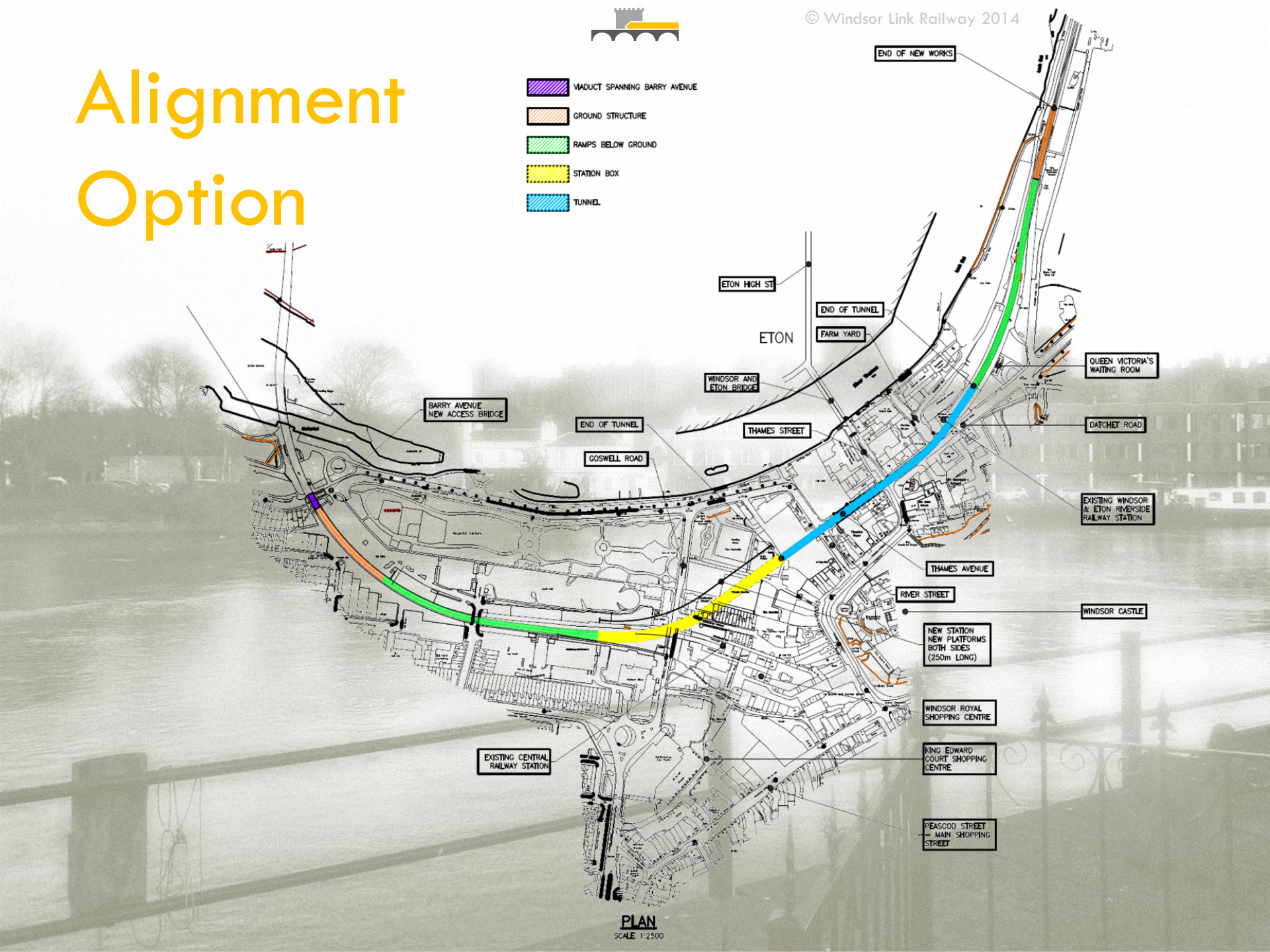
Alignment Option



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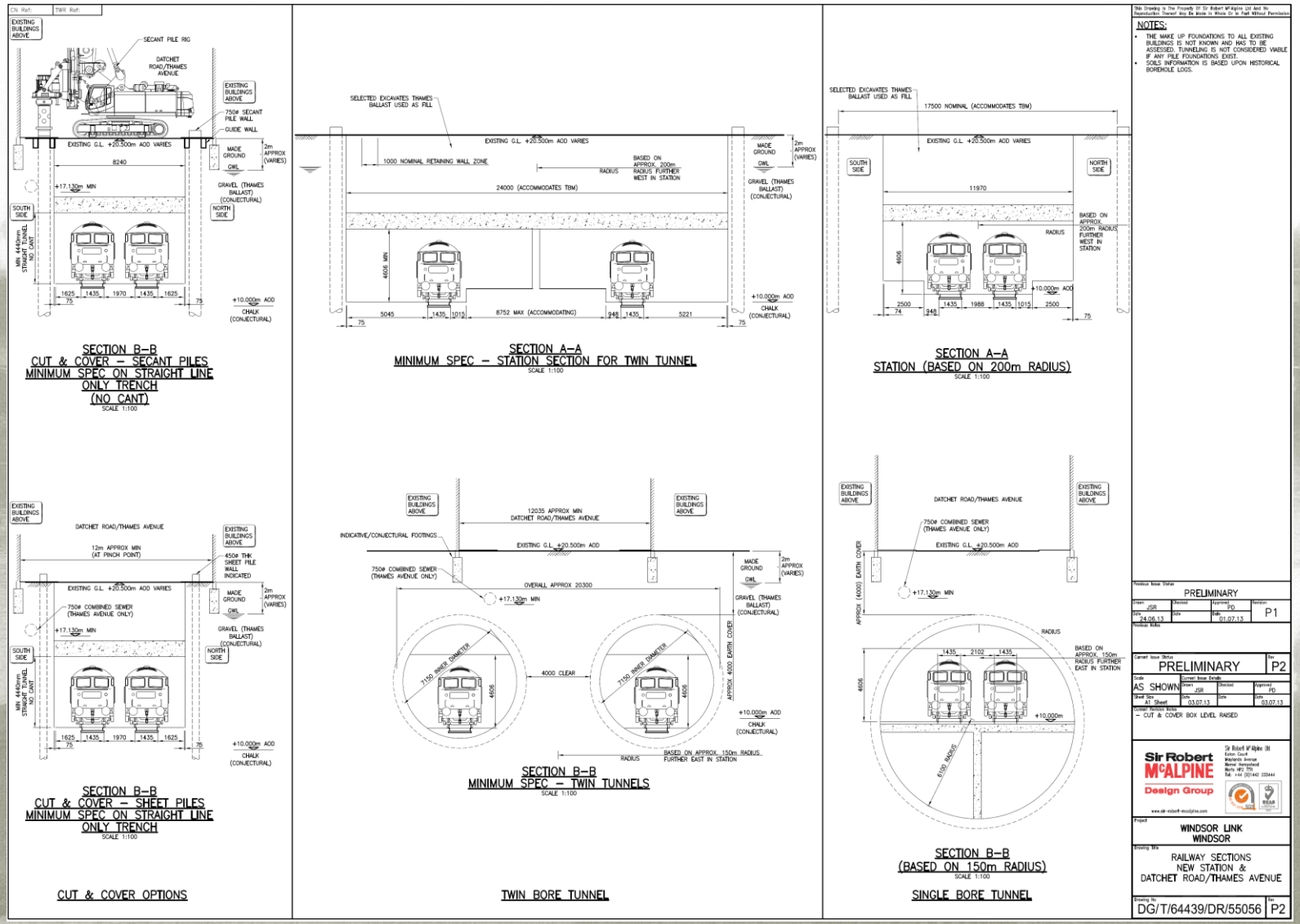
Tunnel Options



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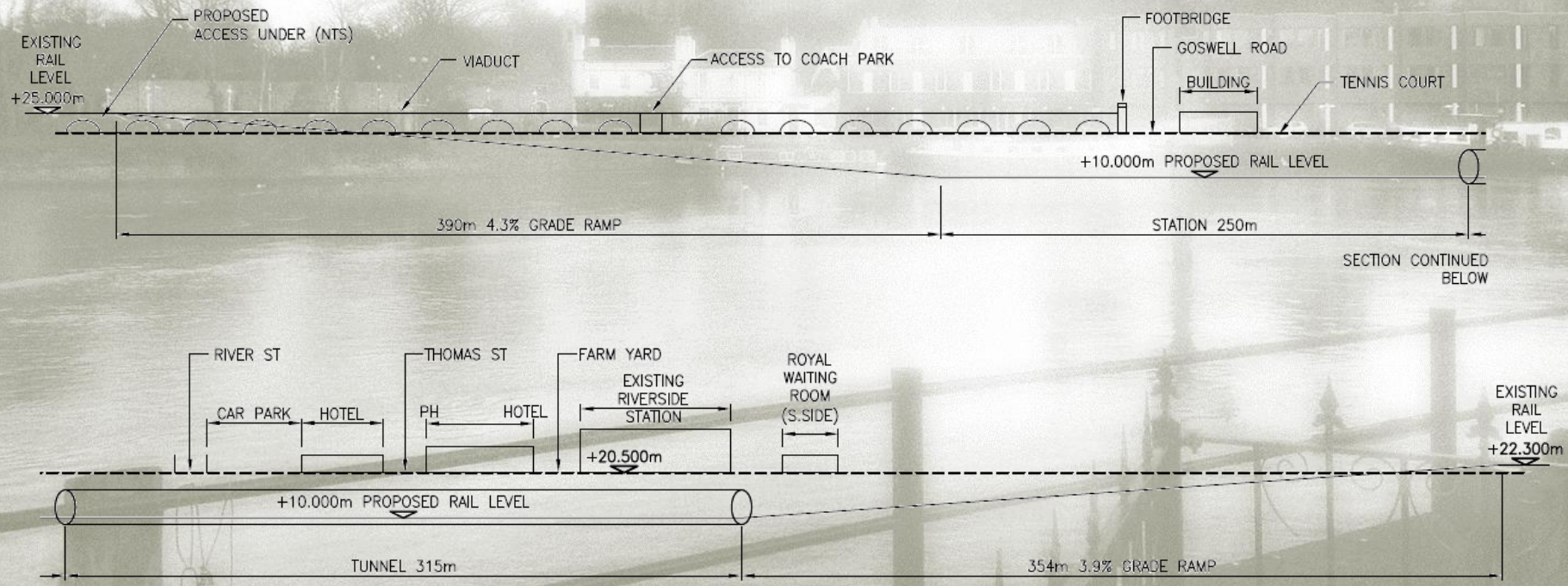
Long Section of Vertical Alignment



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Sir Robert McALPINE

"Our conclusion is that we have a high level of confidence that the Windsor Link Railway project is technically deliverable"

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But even if we can build it, does it add up?

BCR > 2

"High value-for-money" according to the DfT classification scheme

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But what does the rail link do for Windsor residents?

- 10 minutes off journey time to Paddington
- 12 minutes off journey time to Waterloo
- Many other journeys practical (e.g. Ascot to Windsor)
- 7,000 fewer car journeys in Windsor
- £13,000 added to value of average property*

*Rising house prices not a benefit to all, especially if you are trying to get on the housing ladder, but a measure of improvement in relative standard of living nonetheless

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- The railway doesn't require any property development.
- It doesn't damage any listed buildings or green space
- But can we do better than this?

Improving Windsor

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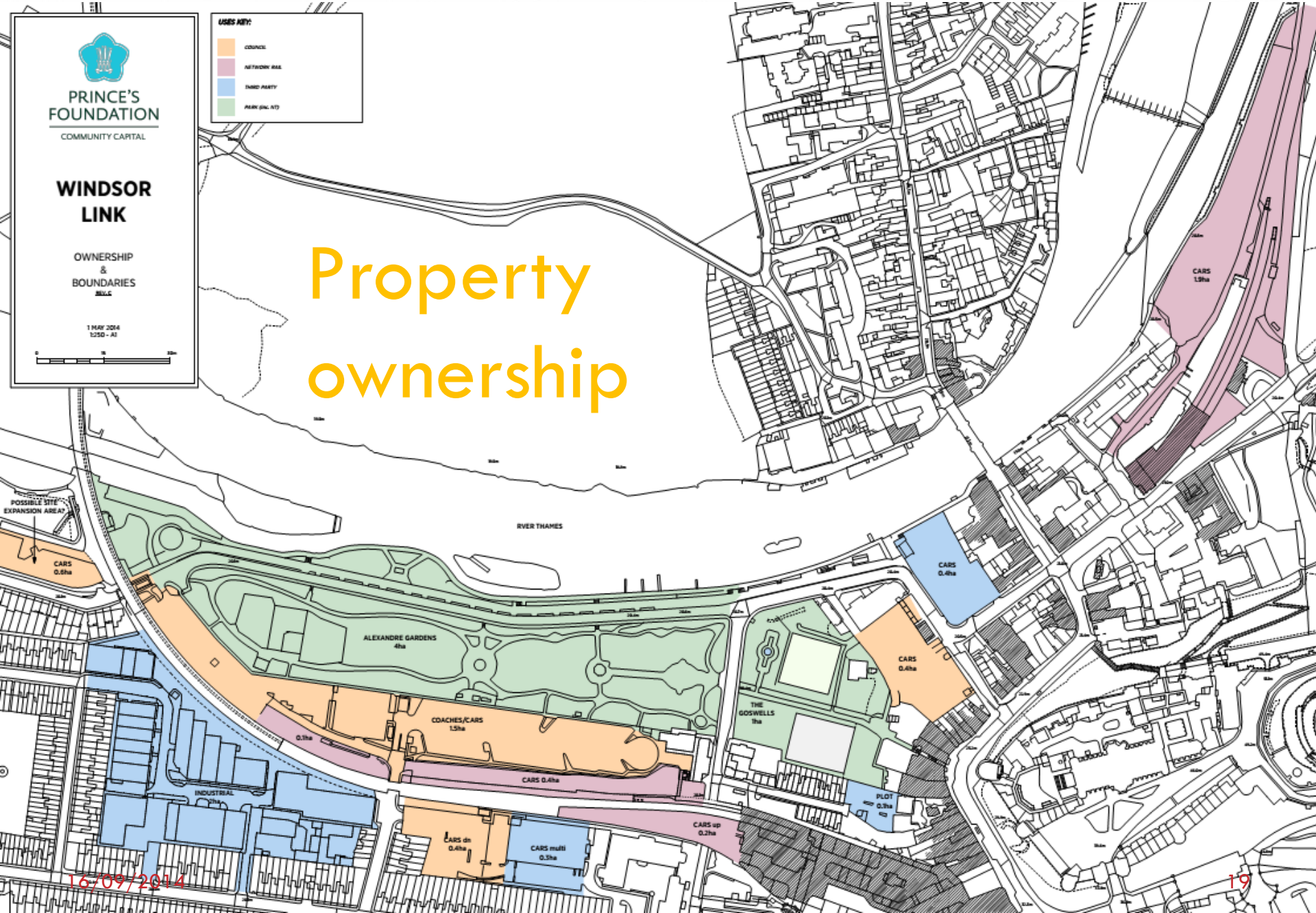
Property ownership



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Ideas for improvement

- Pedestrianise Barry Avenue
- Raising the park up to the same height as the flood defence so that the original vision of a riverside park is restored
- Putting parking under the park (perhaps 1,600 spaces could be provided in this way)
- Putting something better than a coach park and dilapidated arches behind the park

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Residents' survey

- This found that 95% of residents thought the proposals were important to Windsor and 92% petitioned the council to do more to assist
- 75% could support in principle some premium riverside homes as part of the proposal*
- CWNP's survey were consistent with the above: respondents supported further work on the Windsor Link Railway by a ratio of almost two to one†

*7% error margin
†17% error margin
both at 99% confidence

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Way ahead

Year	Action
2014/5	Partner selection
2015	Policy basis clarified with Borough Local Plan and neighbourhood plans
2016	Planning permission for 'above ground'
2018	Transport and Works Act application
2020	Earliest rail works would start
2022	Rail link operational

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Thank you

Feedback wanted!

WLR is a community-led rail and regeneration project. Many of the ideas here are not yet fully formed so your views are very welcome

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