The Inland Teign Valley route would provide the most effective bypass of the main line in emergencies, being able to maintain services to Newton Abbot and Torbay, as well as Plymouth and Cornwall. It was, and could be once more, a branch line with enhanced diversionary capacity, “the practical railwayman’s preference.”

The “study” of seven possible bypass routes that was rushed out in June, 2014, after being ordered by David Cameron in February, was only superficial and was n... See more

No amount of money spent on the coastal route will make it invulnerable a.

Michael Middleton For me, the anti-Teign Route’s arguments don’t stand up. One being flooding. I am sure it would cost a lot less to lift the areas affected by six foot, than to bore an entirely new tunnel. And heritage lines have shown slight re-routes are possible and... See more

Colin Burges One of the tunnels, Ferridge, the biggest structure on the line, has suffered a collapse and is in very poor condition. Its story is told here: http://www.teignrail.co.uk/political-campaigning.php. The other tunnel, Culver, is open and in good order.

Exeter and Teign Valley Railway - Christow Station

James Garratt The Teign Valley route would make the most sense - that was in part its purpose. I think what is occurring is that although you can argue that the cost of going and then repairing Dawlish is immense. It wouldn’t be that easy to put it back - you hav... See more

Colin Burges The Teign Valley could be reinstated for £180 million, which is around ten times what the track authority paid in compensation to train operators and others after the main line was reopened in 2014.

James Garratt Colin Burges that doesn’t surprise me. I think they should reinstate it. It was a mistake to close all these lines really. I would have thought once you’re past idle then it can follow the line. Shame some of the stations are now private residences.

Chris Hickson Colin Burges: A tunnel through Haldon is the simplest and most practical as was started pre World War I. That would attract freight too as the current lack of service guarantee puts any potential freight transport company off. Must have been an issue in losing Royal Mail. A huge problem with the Teign Valley is the large amount of housing and development on the old track bed especially from Exeter through Ide.

James Garratt Chris Hickson agreed. I can’t really see how you solve easily that situation. Salcombe’s isn’t in the way then the road and everything else.

Colin Burges Chris Hickson There was never a plan to tunnel through Haldon. The 1905 avoiding line would have had tunnels behind Dawlish and Teignmouth. Today, because of development, more tunneling would be necessary. Network Rail’s consultants proved a new line from Alphington to Ware Farm at over £3 billion.

Colin Burges James Garratt Sainsbury’s is not in the way, but Marsh Green Road West, Alphington Spur and the A38 dual carriage way do make heavy incursions. Beyond, very little stands in the way until Chudleigh is reached, where the A38 can be shadowed.

James Garratt Colin Burges: ah okay. Chudleigh would be interesting - would they put it back under the road - is that possible? I don’t think any of this will happen because they judge he railways purely on an economic formula which in London or between two cities makes sense but basically the south west will always be short changed because the for railways here is not just economic but people.

Chris Hickson Colin Burges: The longest tunnel under Haldon Hills would have started at Dawlish, about 1 kilometre inland from the present railway and emerged at Bishopsleigh, about 2.5 kilometres long and rejoined the main line at Hackney. Reference from geology records: “The Haldon Hills, usually known simply as Haldon, is a ridge of high ground in Devon, England. It is situated between the River Exe and the River Teign. Throughout Haldon’s 24 kilometre length there are various local names, around Teignmouth little Haldon being one where the golf course is and if the tunnel had been constructed, would have been directly over the line.

James Garratt Colin Burges: The railway would go under the former A38 at Chudleigh Station but would only shadow the dual carriage way from there to Chudleigh Knott. You are right about the economic case. The railway’s share of traffic is so small. 12,000 passengers a day along the coast and a little freight. In contrast, 45,000 vehicles pass over the line on the M5 viaduct alone. With all the road building there has been in the past 50 years, the railway can’t hope to compete with speed west of Exeter, under present conditions. If it had the right trains and a resilient network, the railway could compete with comfort and absolute dependability. Ministers must shoulder (or cuss) when demand for a high speed avoiding line is made, whereas an achievable scheme that allows timetired diversions might be considered.

Colin Burges James Garratt The Great Western pre-war avoiding line, which was fully surveyed, would have passed close to Teignmouth in three tunnels. Each of Network Rail’s five possible routes, dreamt up in 2014, certainly did go through Haldon. This petition is headed “Railway Diversionary Routes.” If consultants were ever appointed, you could press for a study of your preferred route.

Write a reply...
Iain Nicolson: much of old route no longer exists inland after Heath park tunnel (and in poor state tunnels house building). Elsewhere a38 bypass on sections of old route inland any new line would probably require at least 1.5 miles of completely new lines no easy solution but at some time one day sooner or later may well be needed particularly if predicted sea level rise then existing line with storms affecting it doomed sooner new route planned the better and land of route earmarked for it plans for future even if not built until then all being well if need be able to use as if nothing done more land will be used in between and any future projects become even more difficult.

Michael Middleton: I do tend to disagree a little. Apart from a short stretch and missing bridge at Upwaltham, which could be solved by following Alphn brook and bypassing IDE. Then hugging the up side of the A26 between Finlanne and Clay lane all that is left is a 100mtr section through an industrial estate to reach Heathfield. Seems less of a task than fancied The Bluebell reaching East Grinstead.

Roy Davies: But Network Rail disagrees with that view which is in effect almost a new line the way you have described it. But, it doesn’t really solve South West rail connectivity. The Heathfield - Exeter route is more of a parochial solution rather than the re-opening of the old LSWR route that would open up so many opportunities for North Devon and Cornwall. I have no axe to grind or trumpet to blow for any particular route in addition to making the coastal route more resilient. It just makes sense. Plus, NR etc should have learned lessons from the Borders Rail project. Clearly, it should have been double track throughout and extended to Carlisle from the outset. Had they been conditions at the start, the line wouldn’t have been built.

Jay Ferret: It wouldn’t be too hard to reinstate it. Need to canvass way there is room between it and river for a line. Yet all the line private owned know then. To Eg to Exeter has a few obstacles but not impossible. It’s also easier than what people think.

Jay Ferret: Use old track bed then were embankment was taken out bridge 2. And we’re heads towards carriage was have it going on level and under 1. All of bridges are intact And can compulsory purchase land. Pothole tunnel can be fixed dig out collapse and shotcrete it as it collapsed on a fault line.

Jay Ferret: Old track bed then were embankment was taken out bridge 2. And we’re heads towards carriage was have it going on level and under 1. All of bridges are intact And can compulsory purchase land. Pothole tunnel can be fixed dig out collapse and shotcrete it as it collapsed on a fault line.

Jay Ferret: You could run a single line with cycle way occupying the other old line.

James Gerrett: Jay Ferret: no it would be incredibly difficult. There would be land that would need to be purchased - buildings demolished - the complications of reinstating the line are not impossible but hard to justify economically. I’ve overspent an original map against a modern day map and that alone tells you just how much work is required. You’d have to get the railway over and road at Alphington for example.

Roy Davies: Clearly a Dawlish avoiding line is needed but reinstituting the Teign Valley line through to Exeter would be on a par with the Borders Railway in terms of what is needed in terms of infrastructure etc albeit over much a shorter distance. As regards the economics, one MJP said open a station or open a line and they’ll get used as it happening already in Exeter along with the planned Heath Barton station - who needs civil servants? But the reality is that Plymouth to Exeter via Okehampton is far more viable and would open up possibilities for North Devon and north Cornwall (a park and ride where the line crosses the A39).

Jay Ferret: Melton viaduct won’t take the weight of a train and cycle was are more important to government.

Colin Burgess: You’re missing the point made by me and countless others: the Okehampton route not only provides cover it and when the Dawlish route is incapacitated but it provides a whole raft of opportunities for North Devon and beyond. The Heathfield route or near Exeter - Bishopstoke route both travel through sparsely populated area so serve only one purpose. I am a member of the friends of the S & C route and the history of the line’s survival is the subject of countless books and articles. Chris Green is the real hero and he mentioned that the viaduct argument was largely a red herring; singing the track meant a lot of the problems evaporated immediately. And then, I didn’t mention connectivity once.

Roy Davies: Colin Burgess: I am not missing the point. If you read more of what I have written on the subject you would know that I believe in general railway reconstruction. This is from my 2014 submission: “The great disadvantage of the former Southern Railway main line between Exeter and Plymouth, when considered as a diversion route, is that it would be of no benefit to Newton Abbott, the Torbay conurbation and much of South Devon. However, it is not the purpose here to argue the case for a railway instead of another. This line must be reopened in due course to serve Mid and West Devon and North Cornwall, but its reinstatement is not the immediate answer to providing resilience to the Great Western main line.” A lot of others agree that the ‘Southern’ should be promoted on its own merits, without so much emphasis on its value as a diversionary route.
Roy Davies Colin Burges In that case, the only solution to the Dawlish/Torbay problem is making sure the route is never incapacitated; otherwise, your argument smacks of nimbyism in reverse: the people of Plymouth and Cornwall won’t thank you for that. When a second route to the west was first mooted, the good folk of Teignmouth and Dawlish said NO, they gave it a big thumbs down because they thought they would lose their railway. General railway reconstruction does not happen, such activity is few and far between. So, given the limited resources available, then we have to choose, which new line will be of most benefit and we’re talking freight as well as passenger usage.

Like Reply 2w

Jay Ferret Both lines would be simple with passing places and only used as diversions in bad weather. When not used they could be a commuter line. At a guess 25mph max as for fast lines and the southern would have a cycle way next to it so probably 25mph for safety reasons.

Like Reply 2w

James Garratt 4 December at 20:35

2 Comments

Ed Morton So only a supermarket, a housing estate and a main road to go through in the first half mile then.

Like Reply 2w - Edited

James Garratt lol yes - these aren’t spots but I’ve got them plenty on. You can see straight away the sheer amount of work required just to get it to ride.

Like Reply 2w

Roy Davies I was in Marsh Barton today and I noticed the over-bridge was simple track was that the alignment throughout?

Like Reply 2w

Jay Ferret You can follow original alignment but it is possible. Instead of looking at reasons why it can’t look for how it can be done. Nothing is impossible, just means it hasn’t been done in the right way yet.

Like Reply 2w

Jay Ferret Ed Morton no. We’re Sainsbury’s is cut bank out put bridge,再生 bridge. Then were road goes up carriage way there is another road between houses and road for a line. Have that part flat gradient, so when reaches carriage way there will be ample room for it to go under it and the deep cutting on the side of carriage way.

Like Reply 2w

Roy Davies According to NR, that route would not be sustainable.

Like Reply 2w

Jay Ferret The people had a quick look at line not in depth. The quick option is sea wall out to sea or moors. My opinion is they should get advice from people who know area etc not from people who don’t and who aren’t sat in office all day.

Like Reply 2w

Roy Davies Jay Ferret Like NR (Network Rail) has gone to great lengths in its initial analysis of the various options for the South West, including resilience of the existing route, and various options as opposed to civil servants who, if given the chance, would determine the efficacy of any route based on a desk-bound analysis. While not wishing to dampen peoples’ spirits, NR opined that the Heathfield - Exeter route is not sustainable due mainly to mitigating the impact of the new railway on flood water behaviour may not be possible due to the local topography. The NR report makes interesting reading, although many have read it, I’m sure.

https://www.networkrail.co.uk/...West-of-Exeter-Route.

Like Reply 2w - Edited

Jay Ferret I found it interesting. The sea wall gets some damage (ballast on rail & debris on track) in storms but has only ever been breached a few times in its life. Problem is cliffs to steep. And to buy land above would be to expensive than the gains it. A snow berm shelter would protect line from falls were it is needed then put a break water say for example 100 meters out but at intervals along to break violets thus dissipating its destructiveness.

Like Reply 2w

Neil Bromley I have heard about a recent proposal to build a park and change of tide, which would make sense to help congestion throughout Alphington. Marsh Barton into Exeter would not be a good idea to create a short commuter rail link into shuttle service into the city as well as a bus service from Exeter. It does not help that Sainsbury’s took away a large section of the embankment near the store, but to have a full platform near there would certainly help as well as save out of town traffic. A lot like the Heathfield proposal? The line could then in time be part of the Network Rail wish to do so but it could be a good start to re-installing a vital part of the TVR. Exeter has become a very cloged up city so I think a shuttle service would help enormously from one side. I have just taken the tram from Edinburgh airport into the city, what an amazing idea. Only cost £6 for a 25 min ride, straight into the city. If proves that rail links are vital these days rather than relying on cars to get us straight into town. If I had my way, I would open up many of the small rail links, but alas money seems to only be spent on crossrail and HS2!!! As for a second link into Devon, I do think the Galloping-Fymouth would be best serve especially to help serve the north coast and growing towns like Tavistock, as well as the outskirts of Plymouth. Still looking forward to getting stuck in on the north rail link in some way, a good start!!

Like Reply 2w

Write a reply...
The "study" of seven possible bypass routes that was rushed out in June, 2014, after David Cameron ordered it in February, was only superficial and not meant to be taken seriously. On both the Teign Valley and "Southern" lines, the obstacles were overstated and the costs inflated.

With continuing disruption of the main line and measures which may make it more resilient years from being completed, is it unreasonable to ask that some of the £15-million granted to Network Rail for exploratory work on the coast be spent on an in-depth examination of bypass routes?

Please sign this petition and persuade others to do the same.