

## Chiltern Railways London Marylebone to Oxford line to go ahead

**A new £130m rail route is to be built between Oxford and London Marylebone after a bid to stop the project was turned down by the High Court.**

Oxford resident Sean Feeney mounted a legal challenge against the Department for Transport's decision to give Chiltern Railways the go ahead.

Welcoming the decision, Graham Cross, firm director, said it would be the "first new rail link between two major British cities for 100 years".

It is set to open in Spring 2016.

Mr Cross added: "The line [is] expected to deliver significant economic benefits for those living and working along the route.

"Towns and villages to the north of Oxford will gain, especially from improved rail access and a new parkway station for the region.

"In addition, the fast growing town of Bicester will enjoy an additional link to the capital adjacent to Bicester Village Shopping Centre.

"The project will also see the re-establishment of long lost rail links, such as between High Wycombe and Oxford."

### Roosting bats

A Department for Transport (DfT) spokesman said: "The court's judgment shows the department's handling of the case and the way in which we arrived at our decision were correct.

"It confirms that the department took sufficient steps to assess the impact of the scheme on Oxford Meadows before deciding to make the TWA [Transport & Works Act] Order."

Construction is expected to begin in the Summer between Bicester Town and Oxford.

Chiltern Railways announced plans for a new service in 2009. These were delayed in 2011 when a planning inspector said works at Wolvercote tunnel would be harmful to the bats that use it to roost.

It has since come to an agreement with Natural England to monitor the bat population closely.

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