

LONDON TILBURY AND SCOTTISH RAILWAY

The railway was authorised in 1852 and the first section was opened in 1854 by the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway Company, which was a joint venture between the London and Blackwall Railway and the Eastern Counties Railway companies. The route was extended in phases and partnerships were formed with the Midland Railway and District Railway to provide through-services.

The main line runs from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness via Basildon over a distance of 39 miles 40 chains (63.6 km). A loop line between Barking and Pitsea provides an alternative route via Grays and Tilbury, and there is a short branch line connecting the two via Ockendon. The line has a maximum speed limit of 75 mph (121 km/h), although the Class 357 electric trains which run on it are capable of a speed of 100 mph (160 km/h).

In 1902 the Whitechapel and Bow Railway was constructed as a joint venture with the District Railway, connecting the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway at Bow with the District Railway at Whitechapel. The connection allowed through-running of District Railway trains from the tunnels under central London to provide local services to Upminster from 2 June 1902.

When the Metropolitan, District and Whitechapel & Bow Railway lines were electrified, an additional pair of tracks was installed between Bow and East Ham and the service was cut back to there from 30 September 1905. The electrified tracks were extended to Barking and that section opened on 1 April 1908. Delayed by World War I, the electric tracks were eventually extended to Upminster and District line services started to and from there on 12 September 1932.

The London Plan Working Party Report of 1949 envisaged as its Route G the LTSR electrified and diverted away from Fenchurch Street to Bank and onward through the Waterloo & City line tunnels to Waterloo and its suburban lines. Of course, the Waterloo & City tunnels would have had to be bored out to main-line size for this proposal to succeed.

However, electrification went ahead from 1961 to 1962 under British Railways and direct passenger services from Bromley, Plaistow, Upton Park, East Ham, Becontree, Dagenham and Hornchurch to Fenchurch Street were withdrawn. In 1974 a station was opened to serve the new town of Basildon and in 1995 a station was built at Chafford Hundred to serve the new community there as well as Lakeside Shopping Centre. Platforms were re-established and opened at West Ham in 1999 to provide interchange with the extended Jubilee line.

LAINDON STATION

In the late 1800s Laindon was quite sparsely populated but with the coming of the railway change was evident within a short time. A new direct route linking Pitsea with Barking was proposed, with the provision for five new railway stations.

The planned course of the new line would pass through the then parish of Little Burstead where its boundary met that of Lee Chapel parish and it was here that the L.T.S.R. acquired land for a new station. Although geographically in the wrong location, the Laindon parish boundary being about a quarter of a mile away, the company chose to call the station Laindon. An Act of Parliament authorisation the new route was passed on 24th July 1882, and by 1885 the line was open as far as Upminster. East Horndon, the first of two intermediate stations before Pitsea, opened next in 1886, followed two years later by Laindon, which opened on 1st June 1888 along with the now completed line.

The station layout at Laindon closely resembled East Horndon (renamed West Horndon in 1949), even down to the down side placement of the station masters house and booking hall. The two platforms were both provided with a weather canopy, and passenger access to London bound trains was reached via an ornate overbridge.

Sidings were also laid and a goods shed built. Accommodation for other rail staff was also provided in the form of a single terrace row comprising eight houses. These were called Railway Cottages; numbered 1-8 and built alongside the line on the down side approach to the station and close to the signal box. As early as the 1920s, and possibly earlier, passengers could purchase cigarettes and tobacco and various other items from a Finlay's kiosk.

For many years Laindon remained little altered, the first major change coming in 1933 when the up platform was converted to an island. This third line allowed a passing loop, and the new third platform (platform 1) became the new up when the original one became reversible in 1957.

This change, including the renaming of the down (Shoeburyness bound) platform 1 to platform 3, enabled starter trains to operate from platform 2, which, despite a withdrawal attempt by rail operator c2c in 2006, continue today.

A new signal box was added to the island platforms, which also had its pedestrian overbridge replaced and extended to the High Road. New platform buildings were also erected under a longer roof canopy.

These were for a gentlemen's convenience, a Ladies' waiting room & convenience and a general waiting room. The platforms were also extended to 700 feet. A further addition in the form of a small W.H. Smith & Son kiosk selling newspapers appeared around this time and built across the platform against the side wall of the general waiting room.

The Finlay & Co. Ltd. tobacco kiosk was positioned lengthways in the centre of the platforms adjacent to the Smith's kiosk and close to a weighing machine.

When Basildon was designated a new town in 1949, British Railways were in no immediate hurry to provide a station for Basildon; Laindon and Pitsea were then considered sufficient to serve the area. Perhaps to reflect this the name boards at Laindon were changed to 'LAINDON FOR BASILDON' possibly during the 1960s up to the time of Basildon opening in 1974.

The Goods service was withdrawn on 5th June 1967, though a goods shed remained empty and derelict for years after. More recently the island platforms saw change when the signal box was taken out of service on Sunday 4th June, 1995 when the line was re-signalled between Laindon and Chalkwell (signalling from then on being controlled from Upminster). The detached sales kiosk was also removed around the same time.

Station Approach no longer has direct vehicular access to the High Road; Northumberland Avenue now being the entrance/exit route, and the cafe, much frequented by bus crews, was demolished in the 1980s along with another small building used by various taxi companys like Sidney Farmer's and Basildon Radio Taxis. One building on the station side still remains and is now in use by a local taxi company, having formerly been (from 1968) the Watson, Temple & Waymouth, and more recently Watson, Temple, Talbot & White estate agents office.

The far end of the goods yard was for many years used by a number of locally based coal

RAILWAYS (ACCIDENT, PITSEA)

HC Deb 19 April 1961 vol 638 cc1170-21170

§Mr. Gardner (by Private Notice)

asked the Minister of Transport whether he has any statement to make about the rail crash last night near Pitsea.

§The Minister of Transport (Mr. Ernest Marples)

Yes, Sir. At about 1.30 p.m., the 12.25 p.m. Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness passenger train, which was proceeding over the up line on account of prearranged engineering work on the down line, became derailed at a point about half-a-mile on the London side of Pitsea station. The engine turned over and the leading two coaches telescoped badly. The third and fourth coaches were derailed and damaged.

There were about 150 passengers in the train. I regret to say that two of them were killed and 42 injured. Thirty-six passengers were detained in hospital [1171](#) last night. Twenty-five are still in hospital.

I would like to extend my sympathy and, I am sure, the sympathy of the whole House, to the relatives of those who died, and to wish the injured a speedy recovery.

The emergency services responded rapidly to calls for help. The House would, I know, wish me to thank them, and the many local persons who went to the site, for the assistance they gave.

During the evening rush period, trains from Fenchurch Street for Pitsea and beyond were diverted via Tilbury, and an emergency bus service was introduced between Laindon and Pitsea. Normal services were operating this morning.

Colonel Robertson, an Inspecting Officer of Railways, went immediately to the site of the accident and will hold a formal inquiry.

§Mr. Gardner

May I thank my right hon. Friend for his statement and join with him in his expression of sympathy to the relatives of those who were killed and in his good wishes to those who were injured in the accident? I know that my hon. Friend the Member for Essex, South-East (Mr. Braine) would also like to be associated with my right hon. Friend in that part of his statement. Is my right hon. Friend aware that the tributes that he has paid to the local and other emergency services and to the help and comfort which were afforded to the injured by those living locally are well deserved?

Is the Minister aware that this is one of the busiest commuting lines in the country? Can he assure the House and, in particular, the public who use this line that there will be no delay in any inquiry he may be making? Will he say whether the inquiry will be private or public? Upon what date will the inquiry take place?

§Mr. Marples

The inquiry will certainly take place straight away, absolutely at once. I cannot say what it will be, but I agree that the quicker we can have such an inquiry and the quicker we can take remedial action, the better. I should like to reaffirm my thanks to the local people who played such a great part in alleviating the distress of the people involved in the accident.

[1172](#)

§Mr. Channon

I should like to join my right hon. Friend the Minister and my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Billericay (Mr. Gardner) in the tributes which they have paid. Does my right hon. Friend agree that the accident was, in part, caused because there was single-line working along the line because of the work on overhead electrification? Will he do what he can to ensure that such work is carried on at a time when there is not heavy traffic along the line, particularly as when the summer months come along the volume of traffic will be even heavier than it is now?

§Mr. Marples

I should not like to anticipate the findings of the inquiry, but I will certainly take note of what my hon. Friend has said in his supplementary question.

§Mr. McAdden

I should like to join in the expression of thanks to the good people of Pitsea who valiantly rallied round on the occasion of this regrettable accident.

Will my right hon. Friend take a personal interest in the question of compensation to the victims of the accident? Is he aware that a crash occurred on this line at Dagenham three years ago, in which the guard on one of the trains lost both his legs, and that the guard has not received a penny in compensation from that day to this? Although there may be legalistic arguments as between the union and the B.T.C. about the amount of compensation, surely the Commission will give him something now. Will my right hon. Friend ensure that the victims of this latest crash are not unduly penalised by overlong legalistic arguments?

§Mr. Marples

I hope that there will be no delay in compensation. If my hon. Friend will give me details of the case to which he has referred, I promise him and the House that I will look into it straight away.