

Gloucester Model Railway Club

Elmscroft Community Centre, Gloucester



Cheltenham South and Leckhampton

An 00 gauge, finescale, 4mm:1ft model railway layout

Prototype

Cheltenham Leckhampton Station was opened in 1881 with single line track as part of the Banbury and Cheltenham Railway. It was originally named Leckhampton and the line was doubled in 1902. Services of the Midland and South Western Junction Railway also used the station as it was permitted to use the line from Andoversford to Cheltenham. The station closed to passengers and goods in 1962.

It was sited in a cutting to the east of the road to Birdlip (B4070) with the road crossing north to South via a bridge, which still exists. The station building was a typical GWR brick suburban building on the up (northern) platform. A waiting shelter was sited on the down platform and gardens were a feature of both platforms.

Goods sidings were located to the east of the station with a small goods shed, yard crane and weighbridge. A signal box was also at the east end and controlled both the main lines and the sidings.

The station was renamed "Cheltenham South and Leckhampton" in 1906 to attract custom from the growing south of Cheltenham and to enable the new service from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Swansea, the Port to Port Express, to call at Cheltenham. This train took the Hatherley loop to Gloucester to save a reversal at one of the main stations in Cheltenham. The platforms were also extended to cater for these longer trains. The name was simplified in 1952 to "Cheltenham Leckhampton".

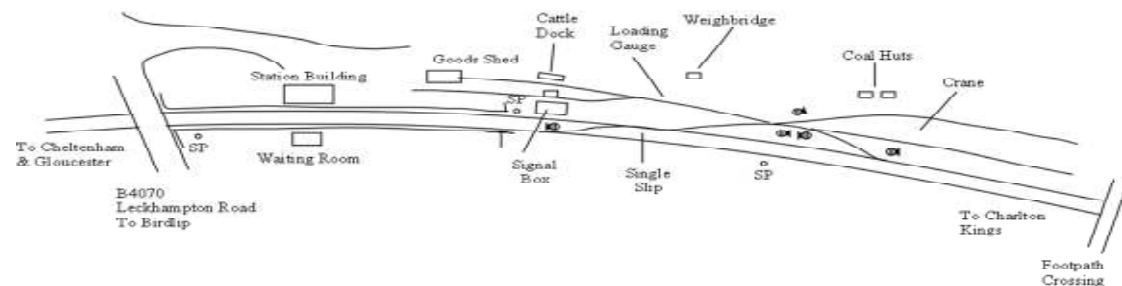
The whole site was about ¼ mile long and to the east of the site the line was crossed by a brick footbridge. Although this footbridge and the cutting to the east still exist, the latter being a nature walk, the station site now consists of two blocks of flats and an industrial estate.

Locomotives were mainly of GWR origin and in the early days MSWJR the largest being the heavy freight 2800. However, in the 1950s it is known that trains from Andover, via the old MSWJR line ran usually headed by a Southern U class 2-6-0.

Layout

The model attempts to portray the station and yard between the two bridges which are used as scenic breaks. A 4mm scale model of the full site would take about 16ft plus fiddle yards but this has been compressed to 12ft x 2ft 6in for the scenic section with two fiddle yards each of 4ft 6in x 2ft giving a layout of 21ft. The fiddle yards each contain eight roads on a turntable. The turntables are set back from the front by 1ft 6in so that they do not interfere with the viewing public. A certain amount of modellers' licence has been used to make the model more aesthetically pleasing.

A sketch of the layout is below.



The track work is '00' SMP which gives a better sleeper spacing than the standard Peco track. It has indeed been mistaken for 'EM'.

The main buildings and bridges are all scratch built from Wills plastic brickwork, plasticard, card and balsa wood. The exceptions to this being the coal huts and cattle dock.

The grass is electrostatically applied and the trees are mostly scratch built from belden wire and scatter material with some made from real twigs adorned with scatter.

Stock

The stock used, at present, is mainly Great Western (mid 1930s) but as little change took place it is envisaged that BR stock could be used when enough becomes available.

The stock is mainly proprietary with some weathering and represents that which would have been seen in the 1930s. Locomotives are mainly Pannier 0-6-0T or Prairie 2-6-2T but there is also an 0-4-2T with autocoach, a Dean Goods 0-6-0 and a kit built ex MSWJR 4-4-0. There may be others depending on our ability to beg or borrow them.

Exhibition Requirements

A plan of the layout is below, showing the floor area required. In addition two 13amp sockets (minimum) are needed.

The layout requires a transit sized van for transport and uses a minimum of three operators, although four are preferred.

Accommodation for the operators is required if the exhibition is over 50 miles from Gloucester.

Layout Co-ordinator

If you would like any further information please contact the layout co-ordinator who is:

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Cheltenham South & Leckhampton

Layout plan

