

PETITION AGAINST A HYBRID BILL

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2005-2006

CROSSRAIL BILL

Against - on Merits - Praying to be heard by Counsel, &c.

To the Honourable Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY AND ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY, MR JOHN MCINTOSH, MR NIGEL COCKBURN, MRS CHRISTINA SELL AND MR ROBERT DULSON

SHEWETH as follows:-

1. A Bill (hereinafter referred to as "the bill") has been introduced and is now pending in your honourable House intituled "A bill to make provision for a railway transport system running from Maidenhead, in the County of Berkshire, and Heathrow Airport, in the London Borough of Hillingdon, through central London to Shenfield, in the County of Essex, and Abbey Wood, in the London Borough of Greenwich; and for connected purposes".
2. The Bill is presented by Mr Secretary Darling, supported by The Prime Minister, Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary Margaret Beckett, Mr Secretary Hain, Secretary Alan Johnson, Secretary Tessa Jowell, and Derek Twig.
3. Objection is made to Clause 1 and Schedule 1, and specifically to the works 3/1B, 3/1C and 3/1D, listed in Schedule 1, page 47, lines 29 to 52 and page 48, lines 1 to 5; to Clause 3 and Schedule 5, specifically to page 75, lines 13-20, to Clause 5 and to Schedule 5, specifically to page 87 lines 6 to 10 (provision of overhead electrification and works to Maidenhead Bridge); and to Clause 15 and Schedule 8, specifically to page 152 lines 10 to 15 (alterations in connection with the installation of overhead electrification equipment on the Maidenhead Viaduct).
4. Your Petitioner the Maidenhead Civic Society and its members, represented by John McIntosh, Nigel Cockburn, Christina Sell and Robert Dulson, is a voluntary organisation with charitable status, comprising 500 members, which seeks to protect and enhance the environment and amenities of the town.

5. Your Petitioners and their rights and interests are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
6. Your Petitioner objects to the Bill because we fear the town of Maidenhead will be unable to cope with such a huge development without considerable disruption and we have major concerns over parking and the traffic congestion that will be caused to the existing road network.
7. Your Petitioner submits that there is insufficient evidence to justify the choice of Maidenhead as the western terminus. There has been no usage forecast or opinion survey to justify this choice. Your petitioner further submits that Reading, with its multiple rail links and the demonstrated wishes of the residents, would be a more appropriate location.
8. Your Petitioner submits, notwithstanding 7 above, that with regard to the choice of Maidenhead as a terminus, it would seem reasonable that Crossrail should finance the provision of an infrastructure to support this huge development.
9. Your Petitioner further objects because the introduction of Crossrail not only threatens to replace the present service with a slow stopping service but might also reduce the number of trains, therefore providing a worse service than is available at the moment.
10. Your petitioner objects to the use of Guards Club Park and Island as a work site and storage compound because it was created as a public facility and lovingly restored by the Civic Society in the seventies. It is a tribute to the dedication of enthusiasts who spent time and raised the resources to create an asset of lasting worth, labouring over a number of years.
11. Your Petitioner also objects on the grounds that the public will be denied access to a large area of the park for at least 6-9 months, possibly longer, therefore denying access for some considerable time.
12. Your Petitioner further objects because of the fear of damage to the environment caused by heavy traffic, which could take years to rectify.
13. Your Petitioner objects because access to the bridge itself would be along Oldacres and River Road, narrow residential roads, unsuited to heavy traffic and in constant use for leisure activities related to the river.
14. Your Petitioner also objects to the use of the restored Victorian pedestrian bridge for access to the island in the assembling of scaffolding upon the island. It is not a robust structure and could be damaged. It would seem to be totally inappropriate.
15. Your Petitioner objects on the grounds of flood risk on the island and in the park. The area generally floods at some point in the winter.

16. Your Petitioner objects to access to the island on the grounds of disturbing the wildlife, in particular the nesting swans and the pair of grebes who inhabit thereon.
17. Your Petitioner submits that Crossrail should look for alternative sites to use as storage and site office, which do not impinge on the rights and interests of this residential area.
18. Your Petitioner submits that Crossrail should be required to explore alternative ways of transportation, either by river or rail.
19. Your Petitioner objects to the installation of an overhead electrification system which will severely damage the appearance of a Grade 11* listed structure, the Maidenhead Viaduct. The necessity to cut back some of the stone and brickwork will further vandalise the site, as will the addition of unsightly gantries on the outer walls of the bridge. We urge that Crossrail finds a solution which will not deface the external elevations. The Brunel Bridge is one of two bridges spanning the Thames at this point, both structures being of historic importance and famous worldwide.

YOUR PETITIONER therefore humbly prays that the Bill may not be allowed to pass into law as it now stands and that it may be heard by its officers, Counsel, Agent and witnesses in support of the allegations of the petition against so much of the Bill as affects the rights and interests of your Petitioner and in support of such other clauses, amendments or provisions as may be necessary or expedient for its protection, or that such other relief may be given to your Petitioner as your Honourable House shall deem meet.

AND your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

