

HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2005-06

CROSSRAIL

P E T I T I O N

Against the Bill – Praying to be heard by counsel, &c.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

SHEWETH as follows :-

1. A Bill (hereinafter called "the Bill") has been introduced into 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. Clauses 1 to 20 set out the Bill's objectives in relation to the construction and operation of the railway transport system mentioned in paragraph 1 above. They include provision for compulsory acquisition, planning permission, heritage issues, trees and noise. Clauses 21 to 44 of the Bill establish a regulatory regime for the railway transport system and clause 45 to 59 of the Bill deal with miscellaneous and general provisions.

3. The works proposed to be authorised by the Bill are specified in Schedule 1 to the Bill and the scheduled works are defined in the Bill as the works specified in Schedule 1 to the Bill which are works authorised to be constructed by the nominated undertaker (defined in the Bill and hereinafter referred to as "the nominated undertaker").
4. Your Petitioners are the Buckinghamshire County Council. The Bill would authorise the compulsory acquisition of land belonging to your Petitioners, to which they object. Furthermore, part of the area for which your Petitioners are the local authority will be injuriously affected by the provisions of the Bill, and your Petitioners accordingly object thereto for the reasons, amongst others, hereinafter appearing

Introductory

5. The Local Government Act 1972, which established your Petitioners, conferred important powers and duties upon your Petitioners. Numerous enactments since that date have added to your Petitioners' statutory powers and duties. Amongst other functions of your Petitioners is that of the highway authority for all existing or proposed public highways in their area, except for those which are the responsibility of the Secretary of State. In addition, your Petitioners are the traffic authority for most roads in their county.
6. Your Petitioners have no objection to the proposed Bill in principle but there are, however, a number of matters which cause great concern to your Petitioners, arising from the proposals in the Bill. Some of these points apply generally to the whole length of the line within your Petitioners' County and some of the points are specific to particular sites. Your Petitioners are hopeful that many of their concerns can be met by agreement with the Promoter.
7. Your Petitioners have serious concerns over the provision of information by the promoters, both prior to the deposit of the Bill and up to the date of the deposit of this petition. This has meant that thorough and detailed assessments of the proposed project, its impacts and benefits have been impossible to compile. Your Petitioners are concerned that requests for further information and responses to specific requests remain outstanding. In particular, your Petitioners are still to be satisfied about the adequacy of the Environmental Statement and its Supplement. Baseline assumptions made over a number of

generic issues have still to be substantiated. Ancillary documentation remains in a draft form which is neither acceptable in principle, nor in its presumptions, proposals and extent of detail.

Highways and Road Traffic

8. Your Petitioners are anxious about the consequences of the use of highways by construction traffic, surface road working and temporary and permanent stopping up and alteration of highways. Your Petitioners' anxieties relate to the impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows, safety aspects, damage to the highway and loss of parking. Your Petitioners are particularly concerned for the mobility impaired. Your Petitioners submit that the nominated undertaker should be required to carry out such reasonable measures as your Petitioners may specify, to allay their anxieties.
9. In particular, your Petitioners as highway and traffic authority require that they must be fully consulted on all proposals to make temporary or permanent road closures and traffic diversions and changes to traffic flow and about any physical alterations to the highway.
10. The powers under the Bill to close highways temporarily are very wide. The nominated undertaker would be able to close any street in your Petitioners' area for the purpose of the works. The closure of most highways would require the consent of the highway authority, but for a number of highways only consultation with the highway authority is required. Your Petitioners wish to secure that consultation is carried out properly, with a minimum period agreed between your Petitioners and the Promoters for notification of intended closures (with exceptions for emergencies).
11. Similar arrangements should be put in place for proposed diversions, changes to traffic flow and physical alterations to highways. Overall, procedures should be put in place to ensure proper highway management throughout the county. All such measures should take proper account of the safety of the public and ensuring adequate access and egress to and from premises.
12. Your Petitioners submit that the nominated undertaker should be required to carry out and fund all necessary remedial and repair works to the highway and any necessary bridge strengthening to a standard specified by your Petitioners in respect of all highways and bridges for which they and others in the County

are the responsible authority. Your Petitioners submit that the Promoters should be required to carry out detailed condition surveys before and after the construction period on land in their ownership which is to be and is affected by the proposals, particularly on highways which are to be used as worksites or which will be heavily used by construction traffic.

Realignment of Thorney Lane Road Bridge

13. Your Petitioners note the proposed realignment of Thorney Lane Road Bridge, and the works to be carried out on Thorney Lane footbridge. They note that the realignment of Thorney Lane South is intended to move traffic away from existing residential communities on Bathurst Walk and Thorney Lane South, and that the existing junction of the Bison Concrete Works access road at Thorney Lane South will be relocated to the north and improved. They consider that the works on the bridges and on Thorney Lane South afford an opportunity to improve the use of the bridge and roads for traffic, and for those residents living nearby, particularly given the amount of heavy goods vehicles which tend to use the bridges for access to industrial estates via the High Street and Richings Park residential area. Your Petitioners note that the Environmental Statement draws attention to the potential hazards caused by speeding at the site of the bridge. To that extent, your Petitioner are willing to work with the Promoter and South Bucks District Council to provide traffic calming measures and restrictions upon the use by heavy goods vehicles of the Thorney Lane Road Bridge after the works have been completed.

14. Your Petitioners note that up to 40 lorries per day will access the two northern worksites for Thorney Lane Bridge during the five-week construction period, and around 24 lorries at other times. Similar numbers of lorries will access the southern worksites. As noted above, the Promoters have drawn attention to the use of the bridge by heavy goods vehicles, and to the potential problems caused by speeding and poor sightlines. To that extent, your Petitioners would wish to work with the Promoter to ensure that access to the worksites by lorries is attained with as little pollution and disruption as possible to the residents of your Petitioners' County.

Dog Kennel Bridge

15. Dog Kennel Bridge is a well-used footbridge, situated between Langley Station and Iver Station, carrying pedestrians over the existing Great Western Railway. Dog Kennel Bridge will be demolished as part of the works to construct the single-track relief line to the north of the existing track. The demolition of the bridge will lead to a diversion of 1.5 kilometres for pedestrians who currently use the bridge to cross the railway, as well as inconvenience to those using public rights of way situated to the north and the south of the railway. This proposal is not acceptable to your Petitioners, and they request that the Promoters should present an alternative plan which will ensure that a public footway should be maintained over the railway line by the construction of a new footbridge in advance of the demolition of the existing bridge. Your Petitioners are concerned at the potential for disruption to pedestrians within your Petitioners' County, and request that pedestrian access to and over the bridge and other routes should be assured at all times.

Iver Station

16. Your Petitioners welcome the proposed construction of the new ticket office at Iver Station, and the construction of the new platforms. They note, however, that Iver Station has no facilities for buses or taxis to stop at the station, nor are there any parking facilities available. Your Petitioners note that the Promoters themselves, in the appendices to the Environmental Statement, draw attention to how safe the access to the station is for cyclists. They note also that there are poor facilities for pedestrian access to the station. Your Petitioners are keen therefore to explore with the promoters the possibilities of adapting Iver Station to cater for better access for commuters by bus, cycle, road and on foot. Such adaptations would be valuable for commuters within your Petitioners' County. Your Petitioners would like to have some reassurances that the Promoters of the Bill will continue discussions about the possibility of such adaptations being made to the planned development of the station, and that eventually such adaptations will be brought into effect.

Maidenhead Railway Bridge

17. Maidenhead Railway Bridge is a Grade II* listed bridge and carries the Great Western Main Line. As part of the Great Western Railway, the UN has placed the bridge in the UK list for designation as a World Heritage Site. Furthermore, the bridge is in the Taplow Riverside Conservation area. The Crossrail scheme requires that overhead lines are supported by posts founded on the bridge structure itself. Three sets of masts are to be fixed at the bridge supports and a further two sets at the far end of the bridge. The Promoters state in the Environmental Statement that the masts used to hold suspended wires over the bridge will nevertheless have a significantly adverse impact upon the bridge, its settings both within the Taplow Riverside Conservation area and alongside the adjacent Grade 1 listed road-bridge.

18. Your Petitioners are gravely concerned about the impact of the works upon Maidenhead Railway Bridge. They are particularly concerned to ensure that there should be no damage done to the bridge. Your Petitioners have not seen any plans of the proposed works to the bridge, and request that the Promoters should provide them with such plans or designs as soon as possible. They seek reassurance from the Promoters that the proposed works on the bridge have been considered and approved by those organisations responsible for taking forward the designation of the bridge as a World Heritage site. Your Petitioners are concerned about the proposals as set out in the Environmental Statement, and submit that the Promoters should consider alternative means of conveying the power supply across the River Thames at this point so as to avoid any impact upon the bridge. Should there be no other way of conveying the power supply across the river, your Petitioners request that the promoters should work with your Petitioners and the District Councils who own the bridge on considering alternative designs for the works to be carried out on the bridge. They require assurances from the Promoters that no damage will be caused to the bridge, both during the works and in the long term, and that the nominated undertaker will ensure that the impacts of the works are minimised as much as possible.

Taplow Station

19. Your Petitioners note that the works at Maidenhead Station to the west of your Petitioners' County, which entail the loss of some 114 car-park spaces, are likely to result in displaced traffic seeking to use Taplow Station as an alternative car-park site. Your Petitioners are concerned that this will result in extra pressure being put upon Taplow Station in particular, resulting in more commuters seeking to use the station car-park and streets nearby for on-street parking. They are therefore further concerned that the works at Taplow will reduce the amount of car-parking space available, as those works will require the occupation of part of the car park, with the loss of some 10 parking spaces. There is already a considerable amount of commuter-generated on-street parking, and further loss of car-parking space at Taplow would exacerbate this situation. Your Petitioners request that the Promoters should use all endeavours to limit the amount of car-park spaces which will be lost. Given the increase in demand for parking during the works, and which should arise as a result of the improved services into London and Heathrow, your Petitioners submit that the promoters should provide improvements to the car-parking sites at Taplow, including increased security measures, and extra spaces.
20. Your Petitioners submit that the Promoters should provide for increased services, frequency, and timing of bus services between locations in Burnham and Taplow Station, to encourage greater use of buses by commuters and therefore reduce congestion and parking problems.

Archaeology and Heritage

21. Your Petitioners have perceived a need for the nominated undertaker to provide adequate opportunity and funding for archaeological investigation in respect of each of the construction and work sites. This is particularly so, given the proposed designation of the Great Western Railway as a World Heritage Site. In your Petitioners' submission the appropriate authority should be required to agree a programme of such work with your Petitioners, and English Heritage. Your Petitioners also submit that the funding of this should be borne by the nominated undertaker.
22. Both Dog Kennel Bridge and Thorney Lane Bridge incorporate surviving elements of the original 1838 Brunel period structure. Your Petitioners are

concerned about the proposed demolition of these bridges and others along the line, given their importance within the context of the Brunel Great Western Rail Line, and its importance as a potential World Heritage Site. Your Petitioners remain to be convinced that the total demolition of these important structures is necessary. They would request your Honourable House to require the Promoters to ensure that best endeavours are used to ensure the preservation of as much of the bridge structures as is possible.

Acquisition of Council Land

23. A good deal of land in the ownership of your Petitioners is liable to compulsory acquisition under clause 6 of the Bill. Most, if not all of this land is highway land. The limits of deviation and of land to be acquired and used are drawn widely in certain cases and your Petitioners are unsure in every case as to why that is. Your Petitioners may seek undertakings from the Promoters that the extent of compulsory purchase should be limited in certain cases either geographically or so that acquisition and use of your Petitioners' land is on a temporary basis only. Your Petitioners also wish to ensure that they are properly compensated as respects the acquisition and use of their land.

Authorisation procedures

24. In line with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act, the Bill contains provisions which provide outline planning permission for the development authorised by the Bill and disapply a number of other statutory regulation regimes which would normally apply in relation to the construction of works, including control in the Highways Act 1980. Your Petitioners wish to ensure that if those controls are to be removed or suspended then in their place there is a robust alternative approval mechanism in each case, in which your Petitioners play a full part. Your Petitioners will, in conjunction with other local authorities affected by the Bill, be seeking to ensure that such arrangements are put in place, but if that is not achieved then your Petitioners would respectfully request that the Promoters be required to accept satisfactory arrangements including realistic timescales for the consideration of applications.

25. As part of the alternative consent regimes mentioned above, your Petitioners must be able to recover from the Promoters or the nominated undertaker their full costs of processing applications.

General

26. There are other clauses and provisions in the Bill which, if passed into law as they now stand, will prejudicially affect the rights and interest of your Petitioners and other clauses and provisions necessary for their protection and benefit are omitted therefrom.

YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE

HUMBLY PRAY

your Honourable House that the Bill may not pass into law as it now stands and that they be heard by themselves, their counsel, agents and witnesses in support of the allegations of this petition, against so much of the Bill as affects the property, rights, and interests of your Petitioners and in support of such other clauses and amendments as may be necessary and proper for their protection and benefit.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS will ever pray,

&c.

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PETITION
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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGAINST,
BY COUNSEL, &c.