

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2005-6

CROSSRAIL BILL

Against – on Merits – 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 James Middleton.

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 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 Twigg.
3. The network proposed for the Crossrail project is set out in Clause 1 and Schedule 1 of the Bill. Clauses 21 to 44 deal with the operation of Crossrail as part of the rail network.
4. My objection is to the totally inadequate rail network, as proposed in those clauses, that the Crossrail project includes. It should be a strategic scheme covering the wider South East and East of England and not a slow, all stations, London-only operation. It should be based on the successful Thameslink and Thameslink 2000 strategy and not a slow stopping metro operation.
5. Your Petitioner is a retired resident of 5 Crab Tree Close, Olney, Buckinghamshire, MK46 5DU, which is at the heart of the Government’s Milton Keynes South Midlands development area, which would be served by a regional Crossrail operation.
6. Your Petitioner and his interests are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, herinafter appearing.
7. The promoter’s scheme has the following problems:-
8. As a slow, short, London-only type operation it will attract minimal users to contribute towards the hugely expensive central tunnel section. It is not even the scheme the promoters really wanted to build as they have withdrawn at the last minute Paddington to Kingston and Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet sections. Many of the stations served by the promoter’s scheme are local suburban stops that will generate few extra passengers. By increasing the number of slow all station trains on the Great Eastern Lines to 12 per hour severe problems will be created for other trains on the line, especially as the slow Crossrail trains are to be given priority. As Crossrail trains are slow, users of fast trains into Liverpool Street and Paddington from outside London will continue into those stations, passing two or three Crossrail trains on the way and interchanging as now onto a wide range of underground services as well as some onto Crossrail for short distances. This again means minimal use of

Crossrail and minimal relief of major terminal stations in central London. The fact that half of the 24 trains per hour from the east will terminate at Paddington is a shocking waste of expensive tunnel infrastructure. The business case for Crossrail stresses the need for provision of efficient and reliable travel across a wide geographical area and the promoter's scheme does absolutely nothing to provide it. Given the emphasis for transport investment in London in preparation for the Olympics it would be totally wrong for a Crossrail scheme as currently proposed to go ahead as a further London only scheme immediately after the Olympics. Crossrail is supposed to tackle regeneration and development issues but it serves little if any of the major development areas in London and the surrounding region. The South East and East of England Regional assemblies have emphasised the need for effective connections between their major centres but Crossrail does not help them at all. Not only is the number of stations and passengers limited but the distance each passenger will travel is short as Crossrail extends only from Maidenhead to Shenfield and so again income towards the central tunnel sections will be very restricted. I did make similar objections to the consultation exercises but these have been ignored. The Mayor of London has had an undue influence on the project and has ignored the wider world city region

9. Private sector promoters have already tabled both London Regional Metro and Superlink. I have used London Regional Metro as a basis for the comparison of what a regional scheme could deliver as it is the most economical and basically connects existing high quality radial railway lines together with a central east west tunnel. It would be of the same order of cost as the promoter's scheme.
10. A regional Crossrail scheme would be significantly better for the following reasons:-
11. It would do everything the promoters scheme does and in addition. It would allow a range of fast, semi-fast and slow services through the central tunnels fanning out into the wider South East and East of England. Thameslink 2000 will have 24 trains per hour doing this and Crossrail could have the same. By operating a range of services the problems on the existing mainlines caused by the promoters Crossrail priority operation would be eliminated leaving the lines to be managed as a proper part of the national rail system. With more users travelling longer distances there would be a much larger fares contribution to the central tunnel section at little extra overall cost. There would be much more relief to stations such as Paddington, Liverpool Street and Euston as many longer distance travellers would use Crossrail throughout. Places such as Northampton, Milton Keynes, Watford, Reading, Southend, Chelmsford, Colchester, Ipswich, Stansted and Cambridge would be directly served bringing wide regional benefits. The Government development priority areas such as Milton Keynes – South Midlands, Cambridge – M11 and Thames Gateway would be within the Crossrail network and with Thameslink 2000 the full range of development areas and major centres surrounding London are connected with effective rail services.

YOUR PETITIONER therefore humbly pray your Honourable House that the Bill may not be allowed to pass into law as it now stands and that he may be heard by his Counsel, Agents and witnesses in support of the allegations of this Petition against the preamble and against such of the clauses and provisions of the Bill as effect the interests of your Petitioner and in support of such other clauses and provisions as may be necessary or expedient for their protection, or that such other relief may be given to your Petitioner in the premises as your Honourable House shall deem meet.

AND your Petitioner will ever pray, &c.