

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 CHRIS AND NICOLA ASHTON

SHEWETH as follows:-

1. A Bill (hereinafter called "the Bill") has been introduced into and is now pending in your honourable House entitled "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 clauses 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 Chris and Nicola Ashton, of 63 Friars Avenue, Shenfield, Essex CM15 8HU . This property is a 3 bedroom, semi-detached family home built in the 1950s, which backs on to the railway tracks. It is currently occupied by the Petitioners and their 14 month old son, Harvey Ashton. The Petitioners are expecting a 2nd baby, which is due on 29th December 2005 .
5. Your Petitioners' house faces onto the site of the proposed works at Shenfield station. According to the Environmental Statement deposited with the Bill, residents of Friar's Avenue will be significantly affected by noise and or visual impact, to the extent that some residents may be eligible for insulation or even rehousing. Your Petitioners will be so affected.
6. Your Petitioners and their rights interests and property will be injuriously affected by the proposals in the Bill to which your Petitioners objects, for the reasons, amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
7. Your Petitioners believe that the proposal to extend the Crossrail out as far as Shenfield will be of no benefit to Shenfield residents or businesses, and in deed nor will it be of any benefit to anyone travelling from Essex to Heathrow. There is already a fast, direct train service from Shenfield to London Liverpool Street (which takes approx 23mins) which adequately serves the commuters who live in Shenfield and the commuters who travel to Shenfield to get into the City and Central

London. As the proposed Crossrail service will be an 'all stops' service from Shenfield to Liverpool Street it is very unlikely that Shenfield residents/commuters will use this service to get into Central London, or even to get to Heathrow as it would still be considerably quicker (and possibly cheaper) to travel by the fast train to Liverpool Street and pick up the Crossrail service from there to West London/Heathrow. The Crossrail service will provide no benefit to the Shenfield community by terminating there. Terminating Crossrail at Stratford would seem a more logical alternative as it already services Docklands Light Rail, Central and Jubilee Tube Lines, North London Line, South End Main line service, Metro Main Line Service and soon to open Eurostar and is suitably geared to accommodate one additional service terminating there. Fast trains from Shenfield reach Stratford in only 10 minutes and when travelling to Heathrow via train, Your Petitioners would travel to Stratford and change onto the Crossrail service from there. The Petitioners understand that the Promoters' plan to terminate the service at Shenfield is because it would be cheaper than constructing an underground terminal at Stratford. However, given the huge costs of this project (estimated at £15-16billion) it is difficult to understand that there is a cost issue with ending the line at Stratford. Not only will the residents of Shenfield not benefit from this service, they will also have to endure a significant period of noisy construction work and disruption to its small high street. The Petitioners moved here in January 2005 from Central London so that they could enjoy a quiet suburban environment in which to bring up a young family. Your Petitioners are now concerned about the noise and disruption that they will have to endure during the project, especially as they will have 2 young children in the house. According to Section 10.20.54 of the Crossrail Environmental Statement (Volume 3), numbers 59-73 Friars Avenue will be subject to significant noise disruption during the construction period, yet the Promoters do not seem to have made any provisions to reduce the impact of noise/disruption on Your Petitioners' home. Please note that the significant noise impact which will be caused by the Promoters, will be in addition to an already busy railway service.

The current noise levels from the railway services are just at an acceptable level and to add to this, will make the house very noisy even from inside and make the noise in the garden unbearable. Your Petitioners therefore suggest that the Promoters consider erecting sound-proof hoardings to the rear of all properties on Friars Avenue which back on to the railway. Your Petitioners would also suggest that the Promoters provide secondary glazing to insulate their property from the noise. Your Petitioners are also concerned about the noise disruption they will experience after the completion of construction work when Crossrail trains are running at the frequency proposed (every 2 minutes at peak times). This will create a very unpleasant environment in which to live and therefore Your Petitioners believe that sound-proof hoarding and insulation for their property would help to ease this negative impact. Your Petitioners are also very concerned about the possibility that their property may devalue as a result of Crossrail. Your Petitioners only moved to the area in 2005 and have paid a substantial sum of money for their property. Like all home owners, their house is their future security, especially for their 2 young children. Your Petitioners would like reassurance from the Promoters that their house value will not be negatively effected by Crossrail construction work and the Crossrail service itself. Their main concern is that if they were forced to sell in the near future (due to redundancy or job relocation) they would not be able to as Crossrail will now appear in conveyancing searches and may put prospective buyers off. Your Petitioners' own searches when buying the property did not reveal anything about Crossrail and if they had, Your Petitioners would certainly have reconsidered purchasing the property. Finally, Your Petitioners believe that Crossrail is a good thing for Central London and favour the development of the transport system in general. However, in this instance Your Petitioners cannot understand why the Promoters want to extend Crossrail as far as Shenfield with the risk of destroying the unique character of Shenfield at considerable extra expense to the Promoters and at the same time making The Petitioners' lives unpleasant during and after the construction phase.

8. 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 Petitioner[s] 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.