

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2005-06

CROSSRAIL

PETITION

of

**BRENTWOOD CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

AGAINST,

BY COUNSEL, &c.

THE PROMOTERS OF CROSSRAIL

CROSSRAIL

PETITION

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 BRENTWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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 Clause 1 (1) (b) of the Bill sets out the geographical areas where nominated contractors may construct and maintain the works specified in Schedule 1 of the Bill in relation to the construction of other railways; Clause 57 (2) defines references to Crossrail as being a transport system running from Maidenhead, in the County of Berkshire, inter alia to Shenfield, in the County of Essex; and Schedule 1, at page 46 beginning at line 32 specifies the scheduled works as including activities in the County of Essex, Borough of Brentwood.
- 3 Your Petitioners are Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, which is affiliated to the Essex Chambers of Commerce and to the British Chambers of Commerce, and represents over 250 local businesses ranging from small, sole-proprietor businesses to large branches of nationally-known organisations.
- 4 Your Petitioners have carried out a survey of opinions amongst proprietors and managers of businesses located in the Shenfield area, which is the area of Brentwood Borough most directly impacted by the proposed construction of Crossrail.
- 5 The results of the survey show that:-
 - 93% of respondents believe that Crossrail should not end at Shenfield, but rather that it should end at Stratford in the London Borough of Newham
 - 86% of respondents believe that Crossrail will bring no benefits to businesses in Shenfield (the only reported benefit of the entire enterprise to local businesses or residents is an apparent saving of 7 minutes in the journey from Shenfield to Heathrow, which appears little return for the years of disruption and potentially substantial financial loss during the construction phase)

- 100% of respondents believe that there will be severe parking problems caused by Crossrail during the construction phase. The Shenfield business community, as with many local towns, struggles for survival in an increasingly difficult trading environment, compounded by the lack of access for their customers (too few parking spaces and inadequate public transport). The prospect of up to 50% of currently available parking spaces being taken over by contractors and others during the construction phase offers a bleak outlook for their business prospects in the immediate years ahead
- The erosion of parking spaces referred to above will also have an adverse effect on the ability of staff to attend their places of business, according to 93% of respondents
- The parking issue is very important to businesses in Shenfield as respondents estimate that 64% of their customers arrive in Shenfield by car, compared with only 9% by public transport
- Shenfield businesses believe that they are heavily reliant on local residents for their trade, with respondents estimating that nearly 70% of their customers live locally and the fear is that substantial access disruption to Shenfield businesses will result in local customers going elsewhere for their shopping and general business, a trend that is already in evidence with the proliferation of out-of-town shopping malls, but which will be exacerbated by Crossrail, and could lead to the closure of retail businesses.

- 6 Other comments made by respondents included the observation that the building of an additional railway platform at Shenfield to accommodate Crossrail trains will cause the permanent closure of delivery yards at the rear of several contiguous retail premises in Shenfield, thus rendering them less viable as trading units, leading to the likelihood of closures.

In addition, it has been observed that the proposed introduction of 12 additional Crossrail trains per hour will inevitably impact adversely the performance of the existing fast trains to Liverpool Street which make Shenfield such a popular residential area for the substantial number of daily commuters into London who live in the locality.

- 7 The trading prospects of your Petitioners' business members in the Shenfield area will be injuriously affected by the proposals in the Bill highlighted at points 1 and 2 above, as the severe disruption to the area, which will be a consequence of the Crossrail construction works, will inevitably result in substantial loss of business for a significant period of time, and potentially lead to the closure of a number of retail and other businesses.
- 8 The disruptions, however severe, might be acceptable if there were seen to be substantial, long-term benefits to those affected. However, as will be seen from point 5 above, respondents to Brentwood Chamber of Commerce's survey overwhelmingly believe that there will be no benefits. This also reflects views of local residents, as expressed in a number of meetings organised locally to discuss Crossrail. There is, on the other hand, a widely held view that Crossrail could be of substantial benefit to the citizens of Shenfield and Brentwood Borough generally if the terminus at the East of London end of Crossrail were to be located at Stratford in the London Borough of Newham. Many current train services from Shenfield stop at Stratford and the single change of train en route to London underground destinations, or to Heathrow, is not thought to be an inconvenience.
- 9 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, or by 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 business prospects of the businesses in Shenfield, including those who are members of Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, and that provision should in consequence be made to amend the provisions of the Bill so that the definition of Crossrail in Clause 57 (2) should be amended to change the reference to Shenfield in the County of Essex to Stratford in the London Borough of Newham and that other consequent changes should be made to the Bill to protect the Petitioners and local businesses in Shenfield from the detriments herein described

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