

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2005-06

CROSSRAIL BILL

P E T I T I O N

Against the Bill – 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

THE EAST LONDON LINE GROUP

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 promoted by the Secretary of State for Transport (hereinafter called the “Promoter”).

Relevant clauses of the Bill

3. 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.
4. Clause 1 (Construction and maintenance of scheduled works) authorises the nominated undertaker to construct and maintain the works necessary for Crossrail as described in Schedule 1 to the Bill and shown on the plans and sections deposited with the Bill.

5. By Clause 1 of the Bill the Promoter seeks power, in executing any of the works proposed by the Bill, to deviate laterally from the lines or situations thereof shown on the deposited plans to the extent of the limits of deviation and to deviate vertically from the levels shown on the deposited plans section to any extent downwards in all cases and to such extent upwards to any extent not exceeding 3 metres either in the case of the underground railways or in the case of any of the other of the works for the purposes of constructing stations, depots or shafts or associated works as shown on the deposited plans and sections.
6. 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 authorized to be constructed by the nominated undertaker (a term defined in the Bill).
7. By Clause 3 (Highways) of the Bill the Promoter seeks power under of Schedule 3 to enter upon, take and use for Crossrail the subsoil of any highway where the subsoil concerned is subject to compulsory purchase under the Bill, without being required to acquire that subsoil or any right in it, except in respect of the areas listed in the table in the paragraph.
8. By Clause 6 (Acquisition of land within limits shown on deposited plans), Clause 7 (Acquisition of land not subject to the power under section 6(1)) and Clause 8 (Extinguishment of private rights of way) of the Bill, the Promoter seeks power to enter upon, take and use such of the lands delineated on the deposited plans and described in the deposited book of reference as it may require for the purposes of the proposed works or for any purpose connected with or ancillary to its undertaking.
9. Further to the Bill, the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland instructed, on 19th July 2005 at the Second Reading of the Crossrail Bill, that, in applying the practice of the House, the Select Committee treat the principle of the Bill as including [*inter alia*] the provision of an intermediate station at Whitechapel.

Your Petitioners

10. Your Petitioners are the East London Line Group, a consortium that was formed in 1990 of local authorities, businesses, regeneration agencies and other parties. Your Petitioners

exist to promote the East London Line Extensions for the betterment of London and the catchments and communities served. Your Petitioners are made up members including: the London Boroughs of Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Hackney, Islington, Lewisham, Merton, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth; and, the Central London Partnership, the Corporation of London, the Cross River Partnership, the Crystal Palace Partnership, the East London Business Alliance, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, London City Airport, London First, South London Economic Development Alliance, South London Partnership, and the Spitalfields Development Group.

11. Your petitioners support the proposed Crossrail project in principle because of the large number of tangible benefits that will be gained by London as a result of its completion. Your petitioners believe that not only will the project greatly improve the existing transport network in the capital, but as a result of its interchange with the extended East London Line at the proposed Whitechapel station, it will serve as an invaluable asset in catering for future growth in both South and East London.

Your Petitioners' concerns

(a) Primary issue – provision of a Crossrail station and interchange at Whitechapel

12. Your Petitioners' primary purpose is to support the provision of a Crossrail station and interchange with the East London Line at Whitechapel.
13. Your Petitioners note that during the Second Reading of the Crossrail Bill by the Honourable the Commons on 19th July 2005, there were a number of objections set out in relation to the principle of a Crossrail station at Whitechapel.
14. Your Petitioners believe that as a result of its interchange with Crossrail, Whitechapel will become one of the most important stations on the extended East London Line. Phase 1 of these extensions is now under construction and is due to open by 2010, linking Whitechapel with Dalston, Crystal Palace and West Croydon. Phase 2 of these extensions is currently being studied in detail and has already received Government business case approval in 2003. This may reach Highbury & Islington, Peckham and Clapham Junction. Your Petitioners expect a Phase 2 to be in use by the time that Crossrail, if authorised, is opened in 2014 or 2015.
15. Your Petitioners believe the provision of an interchange station on Crossrail at Whitechapel will create a strategic point for transfer between the new east-west express

line (i.e., Crossrail), and the new orbital and north-south inner London line (i.e., the East London Line). This interchange at Whitechapel will provide the catchment area with the transport infrastructure and connectivity required to achieve expansion in employment and population; and growth in economic, social and cultural terms.

16. Your Petitioners believe that the interchange between Crossrail Project and the other transport modes serving Whitechapel station (including the East London Line, the District Line and the Hammersmith and City Line) will enable those parts of London therein connected to a new Crossrail transport corridor, to reap the regeneration benefits arising from such an enhanced connection to the capital's main financial and economic districts. Moreover, your Petitioners are of the view that these benefits will be additionally developed following the completion of Phases 1 and 2 of the East London Line extensions.

17. Accordingly your Petitioners pray that the Select Committee, following consideration of the Crossrail proposals, will conclude that the in-principle case for a Crossrail station and interchange at Whitechapel should be supported.

18. Your Petitioners also seek assurances from the Promoters, in particular that, if the Crossrail project is authorised by Parliament, and funded and built, the Promoter will construct a Whitechapel station on Whitechapel Road, and ensure proper and effective interchange between the four lines that will pass through that station (viz Crossrail, the East London Line, the District Line and the Hammersmith and City Line).

(b) Secondary issues - arrangement of the Crossrail station and interchange at Whitechapel and related matters

19. Your Petitioners seek improvements to the Crossrail project at Whitechapel Station where achievable and affordable. Your petitioners note that the existing station and interchange at Whitechapel have been enlarged intermittently over the 130 years of their existence, but have never been properly redesigned to meet modern standards.

20. There are a number of particular elements of a Whitechapel Crossrail station in which your Petitioners have a particular interest. These elements include:

(i) the access between the East London Line platforms and the entrances and exits to the external catchment of Whitechapel, including arrangements for pedestrians, cycle access and bus interchange;

- (ii) the interchanges which exist or are planned between the East London Line, the District Line and Hammersmith and City Line;
 - (iii) the proposed interchange between the East London Line and Crossrail;
 - (iv) any impact of the Crossrail scheme at Whitechapel on future East London Line developments – for example the lengthening of East London Line platforms to allow 8-car trains.
- (i) **access between East London Line and the external catchment of Whitechapel**

21. Your Petitioners note that the existing Whitechapel station has an entrance and exit located within the shopping area of Whitechapel Road, with the London Hospital immediately opposite. However there are lengthy staircases to the East London Line platforms.
22. Your Petitioners are concerned that all three scenarios for station entrances that have so far been put forward by the Promoters at Whitechapel, whilst allowing step-free access to the East London Line platforms, will involve long distances to negotiate between the East London Line platform and the station. Indeed your Petitioners are concerned that both the eastern and western accesses planned by the Promoters will be more lengthy in distance and time compared to the existing (if staircase-intensive) route.
23. Your Petitioners note that under the Promoters' current plans for an Eastern Entrance onto Cambridge Heath Road, while there is stair free-access, there is a longer distance to negotiate to reach the East London Line platforms from the entrance (and vice versa) than under the existing arrangements.
24. Your Petitioners note that under the current plans for a Western Entrance, East London Line passengers would be required to walk the full length of the District Line and Hammersmith and City Line platforms in order to reach staircases to each East London Line platform. Alternatively passengers could descend two levels by escalator to below the level of the East London Line platforms, in order to re-ascend to the East London Line platforms on a step-free route.
25. Accordingly your Petitioners seek a more direct access to the East London Line platforms if this was feasible in engineering terms, to minimise access time and to keep access simple.

26. Your Petitioners note that, for passengers originating from the south side of the Whitechapel Road and the London Hospital site, there will be the added inconvenience of continuing a surface crossing of the Whitechapel Road to Whitechapel station, instead of there being a new underground entrance/exit directly between the station and the redeveloped London Hospital site. Your Petitioners believe direct underground access may be possible as part of Whitechapel station's redevelopment, as the railway line under the Whitechapel Road – the St Mary's Curve – will be disused from 2010 or earlier, and available for other uses including its incorporation as part of a redesigned station. Your Petitioners request that the Promoters investigate this possibility.

(ii) interchange between the East London Line and the existing Underground lines

27. Your Petitioners believe that the interchange between the East London Line and the District Line and Hammersmith and City Line at Whitechapel station are adequately catered for in the Promoters' scheme, with two means of interchange. However your Petitioners also note one of these means of interchange is dependent on the timely delivery of PPP improvements.

(iii) interchange between the East London Line and Crossrail

28. Your Petitioners believe the interchange between the East London Line and Crossrail at Whitechapel station is adequately catered for by the Promoter's scheme.

(iv) other interaction between the Crossrail project at Whitechapel and the East London Line

29. Your Petitioners have concerns at the impact of the Promoter's scheme on any further East London Line developments. The East London Line extensions' Phases 1 and 2 represent Transport for London's current short and medium-term developments of this railway. However there are medium to long term considerations to increase East London Line service capacity further, as the present design of some East London Line underground stations limits the train length to 4-cars (just over 80 metres in total). Platform lengthening works would be required at stations between Whitechapel and Surrey Quays (both inclusive) to allow trains to be lengthened to 6 or 8 cars.

30. Your Petitioners seek assurances from the Promoters that the design, engineering and operational arrangements for Crossrail project works at Whitechapel, for example in the vicinity of Durward Street, will not preclude the eventual construction of East London

Line platform extensions. Your Petitioners therefore also seek that the Promoters ensure passive provision for trains up to 8-car length on the East London Line, by ensuring that works which could infringe this future objective will be amended at this stage of the development of the Crossrail project.

31. To avoid future works, in an area sensitive to environmental impact, your Petitioners believe it could also be desirable for the Promoters to construct the platform extensions for 8-car East London Line trains, at Whitechapel, at the same time as the Crossrail route were built.

Conclusion

32. Your Petitioners consider that commitment to providing a Crossrail station at Whitechapel, and improvements to the current designs for this station and interchange, will help to make the station, its external catchment and the lines serving it more successful, and be a worthwhile contribution to improvements to London's transport, land uses and economic and social development in the 21st century.
33. Having raised the secondary petitioning points, your Petitioners recognise that the design arrangements for a Crossrail station and interchange at Whitechapel are necessarily complex because of the local topography and the existing railways. Your Petitioners would prefer to see a good, workable design to have priority over an ideal design, if the latter threatened the viability of an interchange station.

YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE HUMBLY PRAY your Honourable House that the Bill may not be allowed to pass into law as it now stands and that they may be heard 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 interests of your Petitioners 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 Petitioners will ever pray, &c