

PETITION AGAINST A HYBRID BILL

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2004-5

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 Mark Stephen Lancaster & Suzanne Mary Lancaster.

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 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. Clauses 1-20 with Schedules 1-9 make provision for the construction and maintenance of the proposed works including the main works set out in Schedule 1. Clauses 21 to 44 with Schedule 10 allow for the modification or disapplication of part of the railways regulatory system. Clauses 45 to 59 with Schedules 11-14 contain general provisions, in particular the protections of certain specified interests (including those of your petitioners). Our objection is to the proposal that much of the excavation work for the tunnel for the proposed railway is to be undertaken from the area of Hanbury Street, Spitalfields London E1.

4. Your petitioner is the owner of property in Princelet Street E1 and in Brick Lane E1, roads that have junctions with Hanbury Street, or are parallel and very close to Hanbury St, and which will be severely affected by the proposed excavation, removal of spoil and delivery of sections of prefabricated tunnel and other materials for the construction of Crossrail. Our understanding is that there is no proposal to compulsorily purchase our properties but we are sure to be injuriously affected by the proposed works.

5. Your Petitioners rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

6. My wife and I have owned flats at 79b Brick Lane E1 6QL since 1989, and at Huguenot Court in Princelet Street, London E1 7LP since July 2002. We were not informed of the proposals to carry out these major works until March 2004. Consultation on these proposals was thoroughly inadequate and when searches were carried out for the purchase of the flat in Princelet Street in June 2002 they revealed nothing of these plans, even though major works are planned within 50 yards of the building. The bill should provide for compensation for

the blight of our interests and for the failure of the proposer to consult and make clear the threat we faced before we bought our property.

7. The area of Spitalfields around Brick Lane is highly sensitive architecturally, environmentally, historically, socially and economically. During the time we have been connected with the area, we have seen the gradual development of local pride, of local businesses, of conservation and of racial and social integration. The area is an important example of a balanced multi-ethnic community in the heart of the inner city, which has been recently very successful in developing new businesses, talent and opportunity. It is a community which should be cherished and supported. The main businesses are restaurants, entertainment's venues, retailers, designers, artists - businesses that depend on tourism and on trade with those from outside the area to survive and thrive. People's livelihoods and the community would be severely damaged if this project were to go ahead as envisaged. The proposed works would damage the built environment and the carefully nurtured economic and social well-being of the local multi-cultural community.

8. Furthermore, Spitalfields has the finest collection of early Georgian housing in the capital. These buildings and others are extremely vulnerable to subsistence that the works could cause. They are also showcases of the best examples of how waves of immigration, forced and difficult, have developed positive communities, each of which has left (and is leaving) its mark on this sensitive area. In the space of a square mile or two, we have one of the finest churches in the country, we have the most thriving mosques and the most historic synagogues. In addition, we have more working artists, per head of population, than anywhere else in the world. (Source: Whitechapel Gallery) The old and new, the artistic and the workaday would all be threatened by these works. These works are proposed for these narrow and sensitive streets and yet there is no proposal to build a station for access to Crossrail here. It is difficult to find a reason why this location has been chosen as the site from which to excavate right through central London and out to the east except that the those proposing the Crossrail project thought that because of the ethnic mix of the community here it might be quiescent and unlikely to re-act and contest their plans. This development, whilst bringing welcome transport improvements to London as a whole, does nothing to improve facilities for the local community. All the pain, none of the gain. **We would like to see all tunneling works carried out from either end of the tunnel, where we believe the disturbance and blight would be far less significant.**

9. If the works do proceed as planned, **we would like to see regulations in place, to limit the hours of work, the degree of noise, dust and dirt and disturbance whilst the works proceed and when the trains are running.**

10. Access to and through Brick Lane and the surrounding narrow streets is already fraught. Vehicular traffic to service the local restaurants, retailers, bars, night clubs, fashion houses, market traders, artists and myriad other small businesses is as much as the area can sustain. Construction traffic for the proposed railway would make the streets far too busy, noisy and dangerous for these businesses to thrive. If construction must take place from this site, **provision should be made in the bill to strictly limit vehicular traffic and the times and days on which this traffic should run.**

11. Residents of the area are already under severe pressure, with near 24-hour business activity. Additional lorry, construction equipment, construction materials, personnel and waste movements would make life for ordinary residents intolerable. **We would like to see the proposer provide adequate funds to provide double glazing, sound insulation, protection from vibration, compensation for extra cleaning and other protections for local residents from the effects of these works.**

12. All these activities would blight the area. My wife and I depend for our livelihood, both now and for the future, on being able to let out our flats at commercial rents. We depend on easy access to secure parking at Huguenot Court in order to be able to let, maintain and