

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2005-06

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 THE COVENT GARDEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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 Department of Transport.
- 3 Clause 1 of the Bill allows for the construction and maintenance of an underground railway, comprising a stretch from Marble Arch to Farringdon, in the City of Westminster, the London Borough of Camden and the City of London (the "Proposed Route").
- 4 The deposited plans referred to in Clause 1 (2) of the Bill indicate the levels at which the Proposed Route is to be built.
- 5 Your Petitioner is the Covent Garden Community Association, which represents the interests of over 7,000 people resident in the Covent Garden area together with those who work in, and visit it. It is the principal community amenity society for the area referred to by both Westminster City Council and the Council of the London Borough of Camden. The society has over 1,000 members and has been active in the areas since 1972.
- 6 Your Petitioner objects to the location of the Proposed Route and believes that an alternative northern route (for many years known as the "Northern Alignment") should be considered instead. Your petitioner believes that the Northern Alignment would not only bring far greater benefits to residents and businesses than the Proposed Route, but also that a great number of nuisance issues related to Crossrail would be avoided were it to be built instead of the Proposed Route.
- 7 Your Petitioner objects to the insufficient depth of the planned railway tunnel under parts of the Proposed Route. In certain areas a depth of only 25 metres would be achieved. It is to be expected that this limited depth would cause vibrations, noise nuisance, and potential material damage to residential buildings and businesses above. No undertaking has been given to use floating track bed even when the tunnel is at its highest. Unless this is required by Parliament it would not happen. It would make a worthwhile reduction to, but not eliminate, the noise and vibration nuisance. The limited depth of the Proposed Route is dictated by geological limitations from which the Northern Alignment does not suffer. The Northern Alignment would run at far greater depth.

- 8 Your Petitioner objects to the insufficient consultation of residents by the Promoters. It is your Petitioners contention that no substantive consultation took place despite various presentations by the Promoters over the years since the inception of Crossrail. The positive and negative aspects of the Northern Alignment were never seriously discussed.
- 9 Your Petitioner objects to the effect the Proposed Route would have upon the liveability of the area above and near the Proposed Route, colloquially known as the "West End". The West End suffers from chronic overcrowding. Its streets and pavements were never meant to carry the large numbers of people and vehicles which now exist. It is undesirable to increase the numbers of visitors to the West End. The Proposed Route with its linkage to stations along Oxford Street would achieve precisely this. The Northern Alignment would allow additional numbers of people to be spread out over a greater area and alternative shopping and working areas developed along the Northern Alignment would relieve some of the overcrowding of the West End.
- 10 Your Petitioner objects to the effect the many years of works along the Proposed Route would have upon the economic heart of London. It is to be expected that transport would seriously suffer, that a great number of businesses would have to close, and that the living conditions of great numbers of residents would deteriorate. Parts of the West End may become uninhabitable. This very substantial nuisance would be largely avoided if the Northern Alignment were to be built instead.
- 11 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended to allow for the Northern Alignment instead of the Proposed Route after a substantial consultation period, this Bill should not be allowed to pass into law.

YOUR PETITIONER therefore humbly prays 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 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.

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