

IN PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

PETITION

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 Ronald Leslie Cox

SHEWETH as follows:-

1. A Bill (hereinafter referred to as "the Bill") has been introduced and is now pending in your honourable House entitled "A Bill to make provision for a railway between Euston in London and a junction with the West Coast Main Line at Handsacre in Staffordshire, with a spur from Water Orton in Warwickshire to Curzon Street in Birmingham; and for connected purposes"
2. The Bill is presented by Mr Secretary McLoughlin, supported by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary Theresa May, Secretary Vince Cable, Secretary Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary Eric Pickles, Secretary Owen Paterson, Secretary Edward Davey, and Mr Robert Goodwill.
3. Clauses 1 to 36 set out the Bill's objectives in relation to the construction and operation of the railway mentioned in paragraph 1 above. They include provision for the construction of works, highways and road traffic matters, the compulsory acquisition of land and other provisions relating to the use of land, planning permission, heritage issues, trees and noise. They include clauses which would misapply and modify various enactments relating to special categories of land including burial grounds, consecrated land, commons and open spaces, and other matters, including overhead lines, water, building regulations and party walls, street works and the use of lorries.
4. Clauses 37 to 42 of the Bill deal with the regulatory regime for the railway.
5. Clauses 43 to 65 of the Bill set out a number of miscellaneous and general provisions, including provision for the appointment of a nominated undertaker ("the Nominated Undertaker") to exercise the powers under the Bill, transfer schemes, provisions relating to statutory undertakers and the Crown, provision about the compulsory acquisition of land for regeneration, reinstatement works and provision about further high speed railway works. Provision is also made about the application of Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
6. The works proposed to be authorised by the Bill are specified in clauses 1 and 2 of and Schedules 1 and 2 to the Bill. They consist of scheduled works, which are described in Schedule 1 to the Bill and other works, which are described in clause 2 of and Schedules 2 and 3 to the Bill.

7. I am the Freehold Owner of the property 2 Red Lion Cottages, Village Road, Little Missenden, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0QZ. Your Petitioner's property will not be demolished as a result of the Bill but it is located within 500 metres of the line, or construction footprint. Your Petitioner's property is also on a residential road which will be used by construction traffic during the construction of the Scheme. Therefore your petitioner's residential property will be subject to intolerable noise, dust and vibrations for the duration of the construction phase. Your petitioner requests that construction vehicles avoid the Village Road, Little Missenden at all times due its unsuitability for HGVs. Your Petitioner requests that the nominated undertaker restricts access for traffic relevant to construction to the A413 only. As a regular daily user of the A413 now and during the construction of the works, your Petitioner will suffer undue delays in exiting the village to access local services which include Doctor's Surgery, Local Hospital, shops, bank, post office and other facilities. This together with the diversion of PRoW, which is proposed to be included within the construction site will deny me access to a vital recreational and leisure facility.

8. Your Petitioner and his rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

9. Your petitioner is gravely concerned about the impact of the proposed working site in Piper's Wood, the open space your petitioner regularly uses throughout the year. Your petitioner anticipates that the PRoW will be surrounded by intolerable construction activity, and seriously affected by noise, vibration and or dust. There will also be serious visual impacts for the people using the PRoW. All of this will significantly reduce the quality of life for your petitioner and reduce enjoyment for users of the open space and PRoW including your petitioner.

10. Your petitioner requests that the area is unsuitable for a work-site but that if it has to be there, then the best means available for minimising noise, dust and vibrations both during construction and operation are utilised.

11 Your petitioner is concerned about the design of Vent Shafts and overhead line gantries which has not yet been released. This structure will be clearly visible from your petitioners home, and PRoWs used by your petitioner and others and it will not fit in with the surrounding environment which is a designated AONB. This will have a significant negative impact on the landscape, and ruin the aesthetics of the local environment.

In order to minimise the impact of the proposal, your petitioner requests that prior to construction, your petitioner and other local residents should be consulted meaningfully on the detailed drawings and plans for the structures. They must be designed to fit in with the surrounding environment, and be maintained to a high standard. Visual screening must be put in place, and this must also be maintained to a high standard.

12. Your Petitioner objects to the powers that are proposed to be provided by the Bill to the Secretary of State and to the Nominated Undertaker and respectfully submit that the Bill should be amended or undertakings should be required so that HS2 Limited, the Secretary of State and/or the Nominated Undertaker must review the construction strategy for the project and its related works by considering their cumulative impacts on communities. And they need to suggest necessary changes from the results of that review before works design and construction strategies have been finalised or construction contractors employed.

13. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your Petitioner, it should not be allowed to pass into law.

14. Your Petitioner fully respects that the Select Committee of your Honourable House cannot consider cases which object to the principle of the Bill, but nevertheless wishes to express his objection to the proposed route for HS2. Your Petitioner is seriously concerned that irreparable damage will be caused to

the Chilterns AONB, and that HS2 Ltd. in proposing this route appear to have ignored the statutory duty of protection of an AONB as defined in section 85 of the CROW ACT. Your Petitioner respectfully requests that the route of HS2 be realigned and avoid the Chilterns AONB.

Your Petitioner further respectfully requests that your Honourable House pays special attention to the proposed Bill so far as it affects the Chilterns AONB in order to determine whether due regard has been paid to this highly sensitive area and especially whether the proposed route for HS2 is appropriate in the light of its adverse impact to the area, its residents and businesses

If a revised route for HS2 is deemed impractical, then your Petitioner requests that the "Chilterns Tunnel" be extended to a point north of Wendover as detailed in the CRAG-T2 mitigation proposal and which was deemed environmentally beneficial in the Environmental Statement. This would significantly limit the damage to Mantle's Wood and much of the mitigation, such as those identified below, would not be required particularly during the construction phase.

Should neither the amendment to the route nor an extension to the "Chilterns Tunnel" be accepted, then your Petitioner is particularly concerned about the increase in traffic volumes along the A413 from Great Missenden to its junction at Amersham with the A355 which then provides access to the M40. In the early morning and late afternoon this road is currently heavily used by school, business and commuter traffic.

In order to mitigate the adverse effects of added construction traffic (estimates of which submitted by HS2 were demonstrably incorrect) your Petitioner respectfully requests that during the construction phase of the railway, construction traffic will be prohibited from using the afore-mentioned stretch of the A413 during the hours of 7 to 9a.m. and 4 to 7p.m.

15. There are other clauses and provisions of the Bill which, if passed into law as they now stand, will prejudicially affect your Petitioner and his rights, interests and property and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioner.

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 his 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.

Signed R. L. Cox



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Against the Bill – On Merits – By Counsel &c

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