

## HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) 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 Mixbury Parish Meeting

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 between Euston in London and a junction with the West Coast Main Line at Handsacre in Staffordshire, with a spur from Old Oak Common in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham to a junction with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link at York Way in the London Borough of Islington and 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 Your Petitioners are concerned with the detailed implementation of the Bill in Clause 1-36 setting out the Bill’s objectives in relation to the construction and operation of the railway mentioned above. And clauses 37-65 of the Bill dealing with a regulatory regime for the railway and a number of miscellaneous and general provisions.
- 4 Your Petitioners are Mixbury Parish Meeting, which is a Parish Meeting under the terms of Section 13 of the Local Government Act 1972. Mixbury is too small to support a Parish Council, and this is the only body able to uniquely represent the village at Parish level. The Bill will result in a high speed railway line cutting diagonally through the Parish. The nearest house will be a mere 170m from the centre-line of the track and the centre of the village will be just 700m away. Thus the properties and amenities of every household will be directly and specially affected.
- 5 Your Petitioners and their rights, interests and properties are injuriously affected by the Bill to which your Petitioners object for the following reasons:

6.

6.i. The Consultation Process.

Your Petitioners have resorted to this submission after failing to engage HS2 Ltd. in any meaningful dialogue. We found the consultation process to be a one-sided affair where HS2 Ltd. addressed our real local concerns with platitudes and generalisations. We are in need of specific enforceable solutions.

6.ii. Local road closure during construction

Your petitioners are concerned about the disruption HS2 construction will cause to the local road network. They are particularly concerned about Featherbed Lane, known locally as Fulwell Lane, which is proposed to be used under the Bill as a route for construction traffic, and will be closed to through traffic for up to 12 months for bridge construction. This is heavily used by parishioners as the only Northerly route out of the village, and closure will separate three farms from substantial parcels of their land. The proposed diversion will result in increased traffic on the A421 at a time when that road is restricted by HS2 related road works, and is itself a major construction route: it will place an unacceptable burden of extra traffic through the neighbouring village of Finmere, whose roads are totally unsuitable for HGVs or large agricultural vehicles: it will result in children from Mixbury being unable to safely cycle to schools in Westbury and Finmere, further increasing traffic volumes.

Your petitioners request that the nominated undertaker provides a temporary alternative solution that will allow Featherbed Lane (Fulwell Lane) to remain open to through traffic during the entire construction process.

6.iii. Construction Traffic

Your petitioners are concerned about the impact of construction vehicles on the village and surrounding roads. The local road network is unsuitable for the heavy increase in construction traffic predicted in the Environmental Statement. In particular the single track Featherbed Lane (Fulwell Lane) is unable to accommodate a large number of HGV movements, and both the A421 and A422 will be restricted by HS2 engineering work as the line crosses them. The result will be that general road traffic will divert itself through the rural road network thereby increasing accident rates, congestion, and wear and tear.

Your petitioners are further concerned that what appears to be a lack of scheduling will result in HGVs queuing along the main roads at peak delivery times.

Your petitioners request that a route to carry most of the heavy construction traffic is provided along the line of the proposed railway.

We additionally request that no HGV movement is permitted through the village or along Featherbed Lane (Fulwell Lane)

6.iv. Visual Impact during Construction and Operation

Your petitioners are concerned about the visual impacts during construction and operation of the line; in particular the impact on those dwellings within sight of the proposed construction compound and auto transformer station. Also your petitioners will see the works authorised by the Bill when enjoying their rural environment, and therefore will all be directly affected by the works.

Your petitioners request that all woodland, scrubland and hedges not on the direct route of the line and not occupying land needed for permanent structures should be protected. Furthermore, screening plantations should be started during year one of the works, using densely planted semi-mature indigenous trees and shrubs to minimise the time before effective screening is achieved.

6.v. Light Pollution.

Your petitioners are concerned about lighting associated with the satellite construction compound and auto transformer station. Your petitioners' village has, by choice, no street lighting, and therefore will be directly affected by any increased lighting in the area.

Your petitioners request that the nominated undertaker provides sophisticated low impact lighting solutions at the compound, to be activated only when the compound is in use; similarly the auto transformer installation should only be lit during necessary inspection and maintenance visits. This will minimise the adverse environmental impact of such lighting.

6.vi. Operational Noise.

Your petitioners are concerned about the impact of operational noise on Mixbury. They believe that, as supported by European Directive 2002/49, the appropriate measure of that impact on an otherwise very quiet rural environment is the peak noise generated by a passing train. HS2 Ltd. has been unable or unwilling to plainly reveal this figure on the noise contour maps. Furthermore many villagers regularly use the open countryside along both sides of the proposed line for the exercise of horses, and for recreational walking and cycling. Being without a village hall, a Post Office, a shop or a pub, rural tranquillity is the only amenity the village has.

Your petitioners requests that the track height is lowered along the entire route through Community Forum Area 14, sufficiently to protect our rural environment from both sight and sound of the trains. A further improvement could then be accomplished by adding a cut-and-cover green tunnel along most of the line as it passes the village.

A less effective alternative solution could be to commit to additional noise barriers on both sides of the proposed line between Warren Farm and the northern end of the Great Ouse viaduct. The barriers might be engineered acoustic barriers, earth bunds, wide woodland and scrub plantings or a combination of all three. They should effectively shield the countryside from both sight and sound of the entire train including the pantograph. Such mitigation must be designed in consultation with the district council and affected Parish Councils to fit in with the local environment.

6.vii. Bridleways and footpaths.

Your petitioners are concerned about the impact of HS2 on their key amenity, the peaceful countryside, with footpaths and bridleways being heavily compromised. They regularly use the open countryside along both sides of the proposed line for walking, cycling, and the exercise of an average of 150 horses stabled in the parish. The routes include one unregistered route, in process of being formally claimed as a bridleway through Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire County Councils. This is the Buckingham to Banbury abandoned railway track, used by residents of Mixbury, Turweston, Evenley and Westbury.

Your petitioners request that, in addition to more effective noise control (see above), bridle paths should be re-routed to avoid travelling beside the proposed track before making a crossing. In particular the nominated undertaker should produce evidence to support the assertion that reinstated bridleways crossing the track will be safe for horse riders to use. The nominated undertaker should be asked to liaise with Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire on the existing claim for the Buckingham to Banbury railway track as a formal bridle path, and resolve this issue prior to construction.

6.viii. Road Traffic Noise.

Your petitioners are concerned about the increased traffic noise from the A421 occasioned by raising the road to cross the new line.

Your petitioners request that the new stretch of road be completed with a low noise surface to minimise this impact on the villages of Mixbury and Finmere.

7. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, clauses referring to these issues so far affecting your Petitioners should not be allowed to pass into law
8. There are other clauses and provisions of the Bill which, if passed into law as they now stand will prejudicially affect your Petitioners and their rights, interests and properties and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioners.

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.

Signed

Raymond Alec Brunton  
Chairman of Mixbury Parish Meeting

IN PARLIAMENT  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
SESSION 2013-2014

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL  
PETITION OF MIXBURY PARISH MEETING

AGAINST, By Counsel &c.

Mixbury Parish Meeting

R. A. Brunton  
Chairman