

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION (2013-2014)

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 Katherine Sarah Weatherhead

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 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 disapply 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 ("the Authorised Works") are specified in clauses 1 and 2 of and Schedule 1 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 the Bill.
- 7 Your petitioner Katherine Sarah Weatherhead is freehold owner of Lower Little London Farm, Little London, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6QQ. Your Petitioner has lived at Little London for 18 years. The Petitioner is a Director, and the Group Secretary, of "The Weatherhead Group a drilling, drainage, and tankering company also based at this property. The company serves in particular the local area, as there is no mains drainage, as such are providing an important social and health community benefit.

Lower Little London Farm is situated less than 1km of the proposed HS2 route. The property is shown on HS2 Ltd Maps. Currently Little London is a tiny rural settlement, no pubs, no shops, no street lighting no mains drainage, and little noise. .

Your Petitioner is concerned, that the value and her home and business has, and will be negatively affected by HS2.

The property is situated in the Chilterns AoNB on the west side of the Misbourne Valley. The property is directly opposite Hartley Farm, which lies on the Eastern slope. The Property has unobstructed views of the hillside where the proposed railway HS2 would run. As proposed it would be on two 500-meter viaducts and a huge embankment. The property would also have views of the proposed feeder station, and balancing ponds.

- 8 Your Petitioners rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
- 9 Your Petitioner avers that she is currently, and will be, seriously and adversely affected now and during both the construction phase and then during operation.

Current and future problems caused by the proposal for an HS2 line through the AONB.

- Your Petitioner as have other people living in the AONB bought their properties at premium prices because of the location of the properties

in a legally protected area. They did so because they value peace, beauty and tranquility. Your Petitioner has invested large sums of money and a huge amount of time and effort and emotion to sympathetically renovate the property in adherence to the strict planning regulations that pertain to the AoNB. During the renovations the house outlook was reversed to look across the valley and to have wide ranging views of this unique protected landscape.

Consequentially if HS2 were built the area would be blighted by uninterrupted views of an enormous embankment and two 500 meter long viaducts with a high speed trains running on top with the gantries, Both the sight and noise would be grotesque. The frequency of trains up to 36 trains per hour. An intolerable situation for people who have chosen to live in an AoNB.

- I see it as a privilege and a responsibility to preserve the protected landscape. As part of the Community of Little London and adjoining Dunsmore, I, have endeavoured to preserve the environment for future generations. I was a founder member of the Dunsmore Society, which was constituted to protect the local environment before we had heard of the proposed HS2.
- The prospect of the monstrous concrete monstrosity, visual and light intrusion, that is HS2 destroying the visual beauty, and the noise and impact of the high speed trains destroying the tranquility, fills me with horror, and great sadness. HS2 Ltd and the government have failed to protect this legally protected area for the sake of their vanity project. I cannot afford to relocate because I am not covered by the current Compensation Scheme. The scheme is totally inadequate and individuals like myself are left to bear the cost.

Problems caused by HS2 project as a whole: the Construction and/or operational phases, which will injuriously impact on your Petitioner

- Property devaluation and difficulty in selling the property.
- Construction noise and operational noise hugely impacting on tranquility.
- Destruction of unique landscape, the line including two 500-meter viaducts and a joining high embankment, balancing ponds, feeder station, spoil dumps otherwise known as sustainable placement areas! The AoNB would be a desecrated environment visually and auditory. The precious tranquility would be lost.
- Reduced air quality caused by construction dust. I have 2 family members who suffer from Asthma and the dust production from construction will have a deleterious effect on them. They are advised to sleep with the windows open and both construction and operational phases will make this impossible.

- Reduced access to health facilities and emergency services, this is problematic as mentioned above with asthmatic family members.
- Increased journey times in transporting my daughter to school.
- Impaired access to amenities. As a family we cycle a great deal and use Smalldene Lane as a route into Wendover as the A413 is not really a safe road for a cycling group. This road is scheduled to be closed under HS2's plans (Small Dene Lane).
- My mother resides in Wendover and she is 80 years old and is not in good health, which involves me in regular visits to see her sometime on a rapid response basis. The increased traffic loading on the A413 will create increased journey times for this.
- My husband had a serious leg operation and in order to help rehabilitation we have installed a hot tub on our terrace which we use on a daily basis and it is therapeutic to sit in the dark evenings and enjoy the tranquility prevalent in the area. This relaxation time will be ruined by up to 36 trains per hour running along the embankment with the concomitant noise, electrical sparking and light pollution, this will be totally alien in this protected landscape.
- I have several dogs which I enjoy walking on a daily basis; this will not be an enjoyable experience alongside a giant construction site. Also when the residential construction site is in existence I would feel unsafe walking around the local woods, this will represent a huge change that I will need to make to my lifestyle which I think is unreasonable and brought about by HS2's plans.
- My 3 daughters have long dreamed of being married in St Mary's Church Wendover followed by receptions held at home in our garden. Under the current proposals this will have to remain a dream as both properties will be plagued by noise and disruption.

Your Petitioner avers that the above list may well be regarded by your honourable selves as self indulgent but it represents to me the very essence of what family life should be, as such I consider the level of chaos and disruption caused by the current HS2 plan to be totally abhorrent.

Hierarchy of Remedial Measures:

1. A fully bored tunnel through the whole of the AONB. Whilst the Southern section of the AONB has received tunneling by way of mitigation this protection has been denied to the Northern section where I live.
2. All excavated, spoil and waste material should be removed from the AONB.
3. Failing a fully bored tunnel an enclosed structure similar to the Arup concept enclosure would be required on the 2 viaducts, Wendover Dene, and Smalldean, and on the embankment, to ensure people would neither see nor hear the trains. At the same time the electricity supply should be buried and pylons should be got rid of. Every crossing point

should be designed as green bridges and we need world-class design for viaducts etc for this specific setting.

3. The Code of Construction Practice should be legally binding with an independent overseer.

4. Compensation Scheme is not, but should be fair.

The impact on Little London and Dunsmore has not been acknowledged, or properly assessed in the ES. There has been a failure to comprehend the topographical nature of the Misbourne valley.

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 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 Petitioner will ever pray, &c.

Signature of Petitioner

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BILL

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AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

Katherine Sarah Weatherhead