

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 Peter John Watts

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. 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.
4. Your Petitioner and family are the freehold owners of Oaktrees, Wood Lane, South Heath, Bucks HP16 0RB. Your petitioner has been a member of the Wood Lane Residents Association for 21 years.
 - Your petitioner’s property is located 500 metres from the line as defined in the Hybrid Bill and is hence outside the proposed Homeowner Payment scheme compensation zone. It has been and will be severely punitively affected by the construction phase and ongoing operation of the railway and despite having lost approximately 30% of its value will in practice be rendered almost unsellable and suffer everlasting property blight. As the Compensation Scheme stands your Petitioner is not entitled to any compensation.
 - Your Petitioner’s property is in close proximity to two Construction Compounds, three new road section rebuilds, a proposed new roundabout, and three major Material Stockpile Sites. It is also located some 600 metres from the track and the entrance/exit portals of the proposed South Heath Green Tunnel. As a result your

petitioner's property will be subject to distressing pernicious noise, dust, dirt, traffic, excess light pollution and value degradation.

- Your Petitioner's property leads into Kings Lane and then Frith Hill, Potter Row and Chesham Road. All are designated to be used under the Bill as major routes for HGV construction traffic over a period of up to 7 years. Kings Lane, Chesham Road and Frith Hill are also planned to be re-aligned and major new sections constructed (with interim closure) and/or diversions put in place. Your petitioner lives in a cul de sac (Wood Lane) and as such uses these roads on average six times daily (leaving and returning). They are his only access to the three local towns Chesham, Great Missenden and Amersham. As such he will suffer extensive major adverse time, cost, safety, stress, health and quality of life issues.
 - Your Petitioner (and family) are daily users of the local PROW's for recreational, social and/or exercise purposes. Up to 16 PROW's are planned to be permanently affected and include Hyde Lane, Mantles Wood, Sibley's Coppice, Farthings Wood, Chapel Farm, Rook Wood, Frith Hill, Potter Row, Frith Hill Farm, Bury Farm. These are all planned within the Bill to be lost by the creation of construction compounds, material stockpiles, road closures/diversions/new constructions and track building (and operation) with the consequential loss of these vital recreational, health and quality of life facilities.
 - Your Petitioner will also be punitively affected through a combination of:
 - loss of peace, tranquillity, aesthetically beautiful rural AONB surroundings only to be replaced by satanic industrialisation.
 - Unsightly visual impacts of road constructions, material stockpiles, construction camps, excavation equipment, HGV vehicles, rail tracks, electrified gantries, cement works, high powered night lights, metal security fencing, and balancing ponds.
 - potential increased security and safety risks to family and property
 - increased risks of utility failures (electricity, water, communications)
 - permanent loss or irreparable damage to four ancient woodlands (Mantles Wood, Sibley's Coppice, Farthings Wood, Jenkins Wood)
 - the adverse impact on indigenous flora and fauna and general ecology
 - extensive travel disruption, detours, delays and road damage
 - additional detritus and litter associated with large numbers of construction personnel and heavy industrial equipment
5. 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.

NOISE, DUST, DIRT AND LIGHT POLLUTION

6. Your Petitioner is profoundly concerned and seriously threatened by the implicit noise dust, dirt and light pollution by the construction proposals within the Hybrid Bill and Environment Statement. It will effectively turn this Chilterns area of AONB into an industrial wasteland.

His property is between 350 and 500 metres of diverted new road constructions, material stockpile sites, major construction satellite compounds, cutting excavations, a green tunnel construction, major soil and spoilage excavations/dispersals/removals, construction traffic and the actual high speed rail track building and electrification. This is particularly poignant given that the petitioners dwelling is located in a peaceful, tranquil designated area of outstanding natural beauty in the Central Chilterns.

In addition the proposed South Heath Green Tunnel once operational could greatly adversely exacerbate noise problems at the entry/exit portals due to high impact compressed air turbulence/explosions caused by 220mph high speed trains entering/exiting this feature. It is also felt that the portals of the 'Green Tunnel' are too near to the South Heath village community causing residents to be exposed to unacceptably high noise levels in perpetuity.

No accurate information has been provided by HS2 Ltd as regards the noise impact created by trains entering and exiting these two portals and how they comply or compare with European or World Health Organisation guideline levels.

In practice therefore the proposed construction of a South Heath Green Tunnel is unlikely to materially protect the ambiance of the Chilterns AONB and could unintentionally exacerbate some of the environmental noise issues.

Your Petitioner is also concerned as to the light pollution created initially by the construction work compounds and thereafter the ongoing operation of HS2 trains over the 2.8km of open surface area between Mantles Wood and Leather Lane. In addition there are potential similar implications with any night time HS2 maintenance work operations all of which potentially risk rendering features of the night sky invisible and destroy the nightscape of the AONB.

Against this backcloth your Petitioner is also most gravely concerned about the debilitating welfare, health and safety implications to his family who have already endured the stress, and anxiety associated with this project for over 4 years and continue to do so.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to mitigate the Bills overall punitive impact and conscientiously protect the AONB.

If this is not possible and given the dramatic punitive specific impact on South Heath residents, your petitioner requests the construction/extension of an extended bored tunnel from Mantles Wood through to Liberty Lane (3.7km)

If this is not accepted by Parliament your petitioner requests that the latest most effective noise reduction technology and materials be employed, construction designs be modified and proposed HS2 train operating practices amended, even to the extent of reducing the speed of

trains in this area. Acceptable noise levels should be agreed & defined (day and night) and be subject to scrutiny and enforcement by Local Authorities or independent agencies.

Your Petitioner requests that construction working practices covering all the pollutant aspects be defined within a published working policy framework and be subject to regular scrutiny by an independent body for compliance and compensation where appropriate.

Your petitioner requests a comprehensive community compensation scheme be formally agreed with residents and introduced before construction commences reflecting the punitive impact of these considerations. These to include specific sound proofing costs & those regular costs associated with maintaining & cleaning properties, cars, roads and surroundings. Proposals for these and the surveillance/compliance/payment processes have not been offered, published or communicated.

CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC

7. Your Petitioner is concerned as to the safety risks, threats, delays and damage posed by extensive HGV construction traffic using Hyde Lane, Chesham Road, Frith Hill, Kings Lane, and Potter Road during the Bills implementation. In total, seven rural roads have been identified for use by construction traffic and in general are small, unlit country roads, totally unsuitable for heavy construction traffic or HGV movements. It has been estimated that hundreds of additional construction vehicles per day will pass through these roads/lanes (an estimated additional 520 average daily two-way combined vehicle trips 60 HGV and 460 other vehicles for a period of approximately 5.5 years). It is also proposed that thousands of tones of spoil material excavated Mantles Wood area be transported along the construction trace to a predetermined area of Hunts Green Farm some 3 miles away Temporary road crossings on the B485 will be set up and and signalling installed.

These small country lanes are used daily by your petitioner and regularly used by local residents, children (using the Kings Lane bus stops), cyclists, rambblers and horse riders. It should be noted that these lanes have no pavement or side walks.

The consequential damage to road surfaces would in addition bring about major safety issues in themselves and generate significant additional car repair and maintenance costs to your petitioner and other users.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns area in order to remove the need to direct the extensive HGV traffic through these rural country roads/lanes.

If this is not possible and given the dramatic punitive impact on South Heath residents your petitioner requests the construction of an extended bored tunnel from Mantles Wood through to Liberty Lane (3.7km) which will mitigate some of the impact/disruption/damage arising from HGV traffic through the area.

Where vehicles are still necessary your petitioner requests removing the need to use small rural roads by the building of specific HGV access roads linking up to appropriate main 'A' roads.

Your Petitioner also requests that consideration be given to loading these vehicles by day and moving them by night in order to ease road congestion and address safety issues. In addition the hours when construction traffic is permitted on these rural country roads should be restricted. Your Petitioner requests the formal review of local road conditions (by a joint community/local authority body) during construction and the regular repair and maintenance of those damaged. Funding for these increased costs should come from HS2 Budgets.

Your petitioner requests that a fully developed, HGV movement code of practice and operational policies be agreed, published & monitored by HS2, local authorities and the local community before commencement & adoption.

Your petitioner requests that comprehensive individual and community compensation schemes be formally agreed and introduced reflecting the punitive impact of these considerations.

TEMPORARY/PERMANENT ROAD CLOSURES, DIVERSIONS & CONSTRUCTION

8. Your Petitioner is gravely concerned and affected with the Bills proposal to close, divert and reconstruct three key local access roads linking his property to the principle local towns, Great Missenden, Amersham and Chesham (Kings Lane, Frith Hill and Chesham Road represent your petitioners sole access to these towns).

Your Petitioner (and family) travel all these roads on a daily basis averaging six excursions per day to access local facilities and services such as shops/banks/post offices/main line & underground stations/medical & dental facilities/library/church/recreational clubs/garages/refreshment facilities/pubs/garages/hardware stores/waste disposal sites etc. The genuine hardship arising from these proposals has not been recognised within the Bill or the Environmental Statement.

In addition your Petitioner commences all longer journeys by accessing these highways.

They are not only the sole access to the local towns but also the three principle exit/entrance access routes to his property. The current provision of rapid efficient emergency services is also seriously threatened by the implicit highway restrictions and potential delays.

The inevitable industrial scale disruption will have major life changing implications to your petitioner with significant adverse time, cost, health and quality of life issues.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to mitigate the overall damaging impact and protect the AONB.

If this is not possible and given the life changing punitive impact on South Heath residents your petitioner requests the construction of an extended bored tunnel from Mantles Wood through to Liberty Lane (3.7km)

Your petitioner requests that comprehensive individual and community compensation schemes be formally agreed and introduced reflecting the adverse financial impact of these considerations.

Your petition requests that the road construction/diversion works are done in a manner that always permit continuous vehicle access to the principle towns of Amersham, Great Missenden and Chesham and that plans for these are shared and agreed with the local

community prior to work commencement. Procedures for any 'failure to agree' similarly should be defined to permit independent arbitration.

PUBLIC RIGHT OR WAY (PROW)

9. Your Petitioner (and family) are concerned that the Bill entails the permanent closure of many of South Heaths footpaths and PROW. They represent an important community asset and your petitioner (and family) are daily users of the local PROW for recreational, social or exercise purposes. They include Hyde Lane, Mantles Wood, Sibley's Coppice, Farthings Wood, Chapel Farm, Rook Wood, Frith Hill, Potter Row, Frith Hill Farm, Bury Farm. Many are through four nationally designated ancient woodlands. They are all planned within the Bill to be closed or destroyed by the development and creation of satellite construction compounds, material stockpiles, road closures/diversions/new road builds and the actual HS2 rail track construction itself with the consequential permanent loss of these important recreational, health and quality of life environmental facilities.

Your Petitioner requests that the Bill be amended to protect and preserve these PROW by the construction of an extended bored tunnel through the South Heath Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty. The proposed South Heath green tunnel only re-establishes one PROW when completed (6 years) later.

VISUAL IMPACT

10. Your Petitioner is gravely concerned about the Bill's proposals to transform the Chilterns AONB into a industrial wasteland and in particular the sitting & creation of a green tunnel, satellite construction compounds, material stockpiles, transformer stations, road re-routing and construction, HGV truck parks, cranes, cement works, excavation diggers etc. In particular:

- The construction and re-routing of three new highway sections (Kings Lane/Chesham Road/Frith Hill)
- The linking of these via a new roundabout
- The setting up of two major industrial construction compounds
- The building of three Material, vehicle, drilling & excavation equipment stockpile sites. Some 100 acres of potential destroyed Chilterns AONB
- The excavation and building of a 2 km Green Tunnel and open track rail cuttings, embankments and viaducts across the Central Chilterns AONB
- The permanent installation of overhead electric rail gantries, masts, transformer substations in cuttings not deep enough to conceal them.
- The planned re-routing of Kings Lane/Chesham Road closer to your petitioners rear property boundary
- The designation of four urban country lanes for the transport, removal and disposal over 1Million tonnes of industrial materials and soil spoilage.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to mitigate the overall punitive visual impact and protect the AONB during both construction and HS2 operations thereafter.

If this is not possible your Petitioner requests that the Bill's plans be changed to include the construction of an extended bored tunnel through the South Heath Chilterns area from Mantles Wood through to Liberty Lane (3.7km).

Your Petitioner requests that the need for the road re-construction work be reconsidered and that specific HGV access to main 'A' roads be designed.

Your Petitioner requests that suitable sympathetic tree planting programmes and rural landscaping proposals be shared and agreed by local Authorities and the South Heath local community. Procedures for any 'failure to agree' should be defined to enable independent arbitration.

Your Petitioner requests that rail cuttings/embankments be cut deep enough to screen out any signs/evidence of the Bills HS2 rail placement (not artificially raised embankments). This is particularly poignant to maintain the Chilterns AONB landscape.

LOSS OF ANCIENT WOODLAND and AONB

11. Your Petitioner earnestly requests the reconsideration of the Bill's proposal to destroy three Chiltern & South Heath ancient woodlands, given the irreplaceable 400 year link to the countries rich ecological past. Three ancient woodlands prevail within 1km of your Petitioner's property namely, Sibley's Coppice, Mantles Wood, Farthings/Hedgemoor Woods. Some 23 acres will be permanently lost together with indigenous flora, fauna and natural biological eco-systems and will sadly directly affect your Petitioner's regular daily use.

Your Petitioner is also gravely concerned about the broader potential loss or permanent damage to the Chilterns AONB. There are 33 designated AONB's in England and the Chilterns is sited closest to London. The primary purpose of this special recognition is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape whilst meeting the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside for all and having regard for the interests of those who work and live there. This Bill does not recognise this in a responsible effective way.

Your Petitioner specifically set out some 21 years ago to find a property in the Chilterns in order to enjoy the rural country environment whilst he commuted to London. The effective destruction of this, with its tranquillity, serenity, ambience, aesthetics, and overall natural beauty will be a tragic loss not only to him personally but to visitors, tourists and all current and future generations. We owe it to future generations to take every conceivable step to protect our National AONB's.

On a more local level your petitioner is also concerned that under this Bill the very 'village' essence of South Heath, its identity, ambience, closeness to nature, social cohesiveness etc will be lost forever.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to

mitigate the overall punitive impact and protect the irreplaceable AONB and the ancient woodland therein.

If this is not possible your Petitioner requests that the Bills plans be amended to reflect the construction of an extended bored tunnel from Mantles Wood through the Chilterns AONB area (3.7km) and at least save at least three ancient woodlands and the indigenous flora and fauna.

PROPERTY VALUE

12. The Petitioner's property is facing a 30% reduction in its value given its close proximity (500 metres) to the Bills HS2 rail proposals but yet this loss is not expressly acknowledged or underwritten in the current HS2 Compensation proposals where loss in market value is not used as a qualifying benchmark in instances where individuals need or wish to relocate. Your Petitioner's property is blighted permanently forever. Your petitioner is in his 83rd year and his partner in her 67th and is profoundly concerned that their personal plans for retirement and property downsizing have been punitively affected. Plans to move to retirement village in 2015

The Petitioner earnestly requests that current compensation proposals reflect what has been publicly expressed by Government Ministers and the Department for Transport, in so much that fair and just compensation be offered to individual constituents & communities to reflect the permanent blight on their properties and the impact on their lives during construction and operational phases of the Bills proposals.

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to mitigate the overall punitive impact on property values and protect the AONB.

If this is not possible your Petitioner requests that the Bills plans be amended to reflect the construction of an extended bored tunnel from Mantles Wood through the Chilterns AONB area (additional 3.7km) and in so doing effectively mitigate the major adverse life changing implications to his and all property values in the area.

Your Petitioner requests that in order to mitigate his potential loss (and those of all the community), that current Compensation proposals be amended to acknowledge the genuine actual property market impact & to quickly and efficiently make good the prevailing blight element based on 'impact on property value'. . This only would need to come into effect if property owners need or wish to relocate. (The proposed current scheme is punitively unfair and should not be based on an arbitrary 'Hardship Basis'). Property Bond proposals submitted through the consultation process have to-date been ignored as have any reference to European major infrastructure compensation schemes. Your Petitioner feels this is just not morally or ethically reasonable.

TIMING OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS/CODE OF PRACTICE

13. Your Petitioner is concerned about the Bills proposals for working practices during the construction phases and particularly the commencement and closure of daily activities over a planned period of up to 7 years given the close proximity of his property to two major construction compounds, three enormous material stockpile sites and the public

access roads feeding them(involving hundreds of daily HGV construction vehicle movements).

Your Petitioner earnestly requests that the Hybrid Bill's plan for a South Heath green tunnel be changed to accommodate an extended bored tunnel through the Central Chilterns in order to negate this consideration.

Your Petitioner requests that if this is not possible then the issue is largely avoided by extending the bored tunnel to at least Liberty Lane, with the consequential reduction in above ground construction work and HGV traffic volume.

If this is not accepted by Parliament then working hours should be curtailed in the evening and weekends within a working code of practice consulted on and agreed by the local community and monitored by an identified independent authority.

CONTINUITY OF POWER, WATER AND TELECOMMS

14. Your Petitioner is concerned about the significantly increased risks of power, water and general telecoms discontinuity (particularly) during the Bills construction phases and the increased inconvenience, time and cost associated with these.

Your Petitioner requests that HS2 and the area's utility companies involved have defined emergency contingency plans in place that are shared and agreed with local Authorities and communities before construction commencement together with defined compensation schemes in the event of failures and discontinuity.

SECURITY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

15. Your Petitioner is concerned about the increased risk of criminal activity to his property, possessions and family during the Bills implementation and the general reduction in their Environmental health and safety during the protracted construction phases.

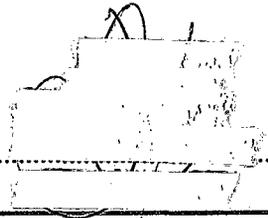
Your Petitioner requests that specific anti-crime policing policies be drawn up in those areas potentially affected along the rail construction route and that these be discussed and agreed and published with local Authorities and communities before construction work commences. Similarly environmental health and safety policies as they relate to South Heath community be specifically defined, agreed and published. Funding for any increased resources should come from HS2 budgets.

Your Petitioner requests that compensation policies for any ensuing prejudicial financial 'cost' situations arising from the Bill eg. Insurance costs, excess premiums, medical care, vehicle damage, etc, be likewise defined, agreed and settled.

16. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, clauses 6 to 15, so far affecting your Petitioner, should not be allowed to pass into law.
17. 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 property and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioners.
18. 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.

Signature of PETITIONER in Person



IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION [2013-14]

HIGH SPEED RAIL
(LONDON-WEST MIDLANDS)
BILL

PETITION OF PETER JOHN WATTS
AGAINST, By Council, &c.

