

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 SIR TIM AND LADY LANKESTER

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 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 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. Your Petitioners are the owner-occupiers of 103 Albert St, London NW1 7LY. This is a Grade II Listed building situated about 120m from the proposed route through Camden into Euston. We have lived here since 1991. Despite being near the heart of busy Camden Town, ours is a beautiful and tranquil residential street. We enjoy living on this street and we enjoy being members of the vibrant and diverse Camden Town community. We have been served a with a Schedule A Compulsory Purchase Order Notice in respect of our property's cellar space – without any clear explanation as why this is needed and whether in fact it will^{be} needed; and we are horrified at the prospect of up to 10 years of serious disruption to our street and to our community. Our property is on a residential street which HS2 Ltd propose to use for construction vehicles.
8. Your Petitioners and their rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
9. As a preamble, although we appreciate that this falls outside our standing as petitioners in respect of the Bill, we feel obliged to put on record our objections as taxpayers to the HS2 project in general. From the point of view of optimising the use of scarce national resources and public money, it is an immensely wasteful project driven by inappropriate comparisons with other countries and by special interests rather than by hard analysis. The massive sums that the project will cost could be so much better used on other transport projects or on projects in other sectors of the economy. The speed and

capacity arguments in favour do not stand ^{up} to serious scrutiny. The argument that HS2 will reduce the economic gap between north and south is wishful thinking: it is probably more likely to increase the dominance of London and the south east. The business case for HS2 as formulated by HS2 and the Department of Transport, such as it is, also fails to factor in the full impact of the social and environmental costs of the project, especially during the construction phase, in areas such as Camden Town.

10. In addition to these concerns about HS2 that we have as general taxpayers, we have serious concerns about various impacts of the project that affect us directly as members of the Camden community and as householders.
11. **Firstly**, it is clear even from the guarded language of the HS2 Environmental Statement that Camden Town and its thriving community will suffer very serious disruption and damage during the construction period, some of it possibly irreversible if economic activity moves elsewhere as a result. As members of this community, we will suffer. The clear answer, in relation to the social and environmental costs for Camden and for the Euston area more generally, is for the HS2 route to be altered so that it does not come into Euston and ends at Old Oak Common instead. This would also of course greatly reduce the cost of the project without greatly reducing its supposed benefits.
12. If the committee is persuaded that the line has to come into Euston, then HS2 Ltd should be required to implement a radically different approach to the design and construction so as to reduce the impact on Camden Town – such as more tunnelling and using the railway rather than roads and streets to bring in and take out materials.
13. **Secondly**, the Compulsory Purchase Order Notice in respect of our cellar will cause a serious blight on our property for up to ten years – making it difficult to sell and reducing its value. No compensation is proposed unless the cellar is compulsorily purchased; yet we will not know whether compulsory purchase will be needed for several years. Since we are aged 72 and 67 respectively, this is especially relevant for us in case we wished to move to a smaller property.
14. HS2 Ltd do not appear to have a clear view as to why or whether the cellars on Albert St will be needed. The only indication we have is that they might be needed for running electric cables through them. HS2 Ltd should be asked to justify needing Albert St at all for any construction work connected with HS2 (including cabling); and if they cannot provide a clear justification, Albert St should be removed completely from the Bill.
15. If on the other hand, HS2 Ltd are able to persuade the committee that Albert St is needed in connection with the construction of HS2, they should be pressed to exclude

the Albert St cellars, and use the middle of the street (which is unusually wide) for any cabling or other works.

16. In any event, the compensation arrangements for our and other properties directly affected in Camden Town by HS2 need to be as generous as the compensations arrangements for rural dwellers. The discrepancy as currently proposed is patently unfair and is no more than a ruse to keep down the budget costs and assuage the concerns of electors in Conservative held seats. It cannot be justified by statements, such as a recent one by the CEO of HS2 Ltd, that urban dwellers are more used to noise and disruption and therefore don't need the same compensation as rural dwellers.
17. **Thirdly**, assuming we remain as residents at 103 Albert St whether we wish to or not, our lives are likely to be seriously disrupted and diminished by the impact of construction traffic, noise, pollution and heightened accident risk during the lengthy construction period. We are especially concerned about the enormous volume of HGV traffic that is planned for the area, including Albert St itself and adjoining Parkway and Delancey St. The use of Albert St for HS2 vehicles would destroy the tranquillity of our street and home, and the heavy use of Parkway and Delancey St will create appalling gridlock and pollution on two streets that are already very busy with traffic. As regards accident risk, we are thinking not only of ourselves: there are a number of elderly people and children living on Albert Street who will be particularly at risk.
18. We have already suggested (see above) that the HS2 line should terminate at Old Oak Common. If that is not to happen, we urge that transport of materials for HS2 construction should be primarily by rail and not by road so as to spare us years of HGV vehicles ruining our streets and our lives. If on the contrary HGVs are to be used to move the bulk of materials, such vehicles should not be allowed to travel down Albert St, nor on Parkway and Delancey St. These streets were not built for heavy goods vehicles and the social impact of HS2 vehicular traffic on ourselves and on our community would be extremely detrimental, as well as causing terrible congestion.
19. Whatever happens in relation to traffic (if HS2 into Euston does go ahead), there must be very clear, monitorable undertakings from HS2 Ltd regarding day to day operations and mitigation measures. Simple assurances will not be sufficient.
20. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your Petitioners, it should not be allowed to pass into law.

21. 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.

22. 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 Petitioners in the premises as your Honourable House shall deem meet.

AND your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

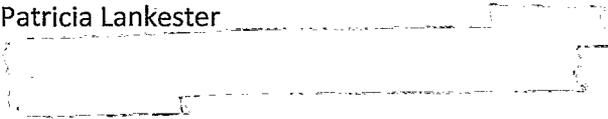
Signed

Tim Lankester



May 18 2014

Patricia Lankester



May 18, 2014

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PETITION OF Sir Tim Lankester and Lady Patricia Lankester

Against the Bill – On Merits – By Counsel &c.

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