

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

HIGHSPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Against – on Merits – 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 David Ambrose

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, Mr Robert Goodwill.

- 3 Objection is taken to the works to be undertaken within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and in particular, to **works 2.13 to 2.27** (listed in Schedule 1 of the Bill in the parishes of Little Missenden, Great Missenden, Chartridge and The Lee, and to the clauses of the Bill which would authorise these works.
- 4 Your Petitioner is an owner of property in Great Missenden and a freelance provider of services to the Tourist Industry.
- 5 Your Petitioner and his rights, property and interests are injuriously affected by the Bill to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

Objection in Principle

- 6 In the light of the decision to approve in principle the construction of HS2, despite the lack of a business case for a railway that forms little part of any coherent national rail network, the objections of the Petitioner are based on the adverse environmental impact of the proposed route, both during the period of construction and in the long term, in so far as it affects the Petitioner personally, not only as a resident of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (hereinafter referred to as the Chilterns AONB) but also as the provider of services. in the area, the market for which services will be significantly restricted unless the major change in the proposed construction as outlined below is approved.

- 7 **Adverse impacts as a resident**

During Construction:

The use of the A413 and B485 being restricted by construction traffic, other traffic is expected to divert to local roads causing significant congestion and disruption to local life, with the particular danger that in the absence of an A & E unit in High Wycombe, there could be possible fatal delays to ambulances on their way to Aylesbury. Similarly, the traffic problems are likely adversely to affect the viability of facilities in Great Missenden, such as the 5 restaurants, 4 cafes and the many shops and galleries offering fine art, antiques, objets d'art, craft products and fitness centres, with the risk that they will no longer be available to residents such as myself. Certainly, my

quiet enjoyment of the footpaths and countryside of the area will be seriously curtailed.

In the long term:

There will be continued serious impairment of the footpaths and countryside caused by the disruption of roads and footpaths and by the physical obtrusiveness and noise impact of the railway.

Some (possibly several) of the facilities I currently enjoy as a resident of Great Missenden may no longer be available, having been put out of business by the disruption caused by the construction.

8 Adverse impacts as a provider of services to tourism.

As a guide to visitors from abroad and driver of vehicles catering for small groups of up to 16, I frequently bring tourists to the area because of its many attractions. These comprise not only the beautiful countryside and pretty villages but also many specific locations of interest to such visitors. These include:

- Film/TV locations for such productions as “Midsomer Murders”, “Four Weddings and a Funeral” and some episodes of “Morse”;
- Chequers and the adjacent estate of the Parliamentarian who, but for his death in battle, might have introduced a lasting republic to England;
- The Roald Dahl Centre and the author’s grave;
- John Milton’s cottage (of great interest to Americans because of the posthumous grant of honorary US citizenship in recognition of his influence on the drafting of the American Constitution);
- The graves of William Penn and his family (of interest for reasons similar to Milton).

Tours in registered buses are tightly controlled as to timing by the “Driving Hours Regulations” so that traffic delays can render such tours inoperable. This is likely to curtail such itineraries during the construction period and, because of the visual and noise obtrusiveness of the line and its trains, to make them less attractive in the long term – thus adversely affecting my freelance activities.

9 The Solution

Whereas there are various measures possible to mitigate various of these adverse impacts, all but one are indeed “various”. Only one solution effectively mitigates all those impacts – both during the construction period and in the long term.

That solution is the extension of the bored tunnel through the whole of the Chilterns AONB, either as proposed by **Chiltern District Council**, or as proposed by the **CRAG T 2 Tunnel**, the latter having been accepted by HS2 Ltd in the Environmental Statement as both feasible and environmentally preferable to the proposal in the Bill. This would substantially mitigate both the adverse impacts objected to in this petition and the need for other less effective remedies.

The avoidance of the destruction of woodland and the disruption to roads and footpaths, as well as the removal of the visual and noise impacts of the line and the trains, would preserve the spirit of the Chilterns AONB and protect its attractiveness as the “lungs of London” and a place tourists would wish to visit. My personal enjoyment of the area in which I have lived for nearly 50 years and my commercial interest in showing others its beauty and history would be preserved.

Moreover, the impact of construction would be greatly reduced. Even if an intervention gap proves necessary, the need under current proposals for an even longer gap as well as bridges, viaducts and embankments would be removed. Likewise, the need under the current proposals for construction sites for those would be replaced by the requirement for one near Wendover from which spoil could be removed by rail rather than road, thus relieving the area of considerable traffic congestion.

When the factors involved in a bored tunnel through the whole of the Chilterns AONB are compared with those involved in the current proposals, it is believed by relevant experts that a bored tunnel would be the cheaper option.

- 10 For the foregoing and connected reasons, your Petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, it should not be allowed to pass into law.
- 11 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, property and interests 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 he may be heard by his 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 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 in Person



