

IN PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2013-14

High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill

Against the Bill – on Merits – Praying to be heard by counsel, etc.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF Michael Victor Coventry and Sigrid Renate Coventry

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 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 Secretary Patrick 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. 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 compulsory acquisition, the extinction and exclusion of rights over land, the temporary possession and use of land, planning permission and deregulation in connection with, inter alia, heritage and environmental matters. Clauses 37 to 52 deal with railway matters, nominated and statutory undertakers, regeneration and reinstatement and further high speed rail works. Clauses 53 to 65 contain miscellaneous and general provisions.
4. The nominated undertaker (defined in the Bill and hereinafter referred to as "the nominated undertaker") is authorised by the Bill, if enacted, to construct and maintain the works specified in Schedule 1 to the Bill being works for the construction of Phase 1 of High Speed 2 and works consequent on or incidental to such works. These works are called "the scheduled works".
5. Your Petitioners (hereinafter referred to as "your Petitioners") own and occupy "Field End", London Road, Wendover HP22 6PN, which property is shown in map CT-10-020 and is situated approximately 280 meters from the proposed HS2 railway line and approximately 550 meters from the proposed Small Dean Viaduct.

Your Petitioners have been in receipt of letters from HS2 Ltd which indicate that it considers that they are affected by the Bill. Objection is taken to both the construction and operation of certain of the scheduled works proposed to be undertaken in and near Wendover between Great Missenden and Wendover. These works consist mainly of a viaduct near Wendover Dean, an embankment between Hartley Farm and Road Barn Farm and Small Dean Viaduct. They include ancillary works such as satellite compounds, autotransformer stations and balancing ponds.

The Bill, if enacted, would authorise the construction and operation of the railway through and near London Road, Wendover and your Petitioners object to those parts of the works outlined below.

6. Objection is taken to the works proposed to be undertaken in and near London Road, Wendover between Great Missenden and Wendover. These works consist mainly of two viaducts, embankments and very large scale construction works in connection therewith.
7. Your Petitioners aver that the proposed works would affect the area in which they reside which forms part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB") and HS2 will cause irreparable and unacceptable damage to this area if it is allowed to go ahead as currently proposed in the Bill. Your Petitioners support the argument that the only option is for a bored tunnel under the whole AONB.
8. Your Petitioners aver that the adverse effects caused by the planning, construction and operation of the railway must be mitigated by HS2 Ltd as much as possible and that your petitioners who, despite such mitigation, are adversely affected, should be adequately compensated for all the consequential financial loss, damage, nuisance, inconvenience, loss of amenity and personal injury that they will suffer.

Suggested Alternative:

9. Your Petitioners propose that the works be replaced by a fully bored tunnel throughout the AONB for the following reasons:-
 - i) Financial savings would be brought about by not having to construct the two expensive viaducts at Wendover Dean and Small Dean, as well as avoiding the need for the diversion of Rocky Lane, the construction of the under-bridge thereat, all the embankment work and the purchase of nearby properties.
 - ii) A bored tunnel would eliminate all the construction work in the area wherein your Petitioners reside together with the associated disruption caused by additional construction traffic on the A413 which is already a heavily used arterial route that becomes badly congested particularly during the morning and evening rush hours.
 - iii) The proposed bored tunnel would also eliminate the fact that, at present, your Petitioners cannot sell their home and are unlikely to be able to sell, or

sell at the full market value, whilst the prospect of the Small Dean viaduct (both literally and figuratively) overshadows their property.

- iv) Furthermore, the market value of their home will be permanently and substantially reduced by the noise nuisance and the proximity of both the Small Dean viaduct and the embankment and your Petitioners' enjoyment of their home, overshadowed by the Small Dean viaduct to the north and bordered by the embankment to the east, will be substantially and adversely affected by the railway.
- v) The integrity of the AONB would, thereby, be largely preserved.

10. In principle the construction of a bored tunnel has been approved by HS2 Ltd.

Mitigation:

11. If the proposal of a bored tunnel is rejected by your Honourable House, your Petitioners propose the following mitigation:-

- i) That all land drainage from the proposed works should be to underground reservoirs with appropriate soakaways.
- ii) That all balancing ponds for railway and railway embankment drainage should also be to underground reservoirs with appropriate soakaways.
- iii) That adequate provision be made to prevent surface water run-off from the proposed under-bridge carriageway for Rocky Lane to prevent the surface water accumulation which at present occurs at the junction of Rocky Lane and London Road (A413), and in London Road itself, causing flooding to your Petitioners' property.
- iv) That a new water main be laid in Rocky Lane before the start of the construction phase in order to prevent the fracturing of the existing asbestos main by the weight of construction traffic.
- v) That HS2 constructs a relief road from the roundabout to the Small Dean end of the Wendover Bypass, extending south-eastwards along the north-east edge of the construction site, all the way to the Wendover Dean viaduct and

beyond, thereby removing all construction traffic from your Petitioners' stretch of London Road and also from Rocky Lane. It is further proposed that HS2 should, in conjunction with Bucks County Council Highways Department, construct this relief road to public highway standards so that, following completion of the construction phase of the railway (during which it would be used exclusively for construction purposes), it can be readily used as a much needed extension of the Wendover Bypass to link up with the Great Missenden Bypass.

- vi) That a footpath be constructed to complete safe pedestrian access between The Firecrest Public House (London Road) and the centre of Wendover.

Damage during construction:

- 12. Your Petitioners aver that they will be seriously and adversely affected both during the construction phase and thereafter during the operation of HS2.
 - i) There will be serious disruption of traffic and substantial delays caused by the additional 300HGV's envisaged by HS2Ltd using the A413, and passing your Petitioners' home as well as to the B4009 with backups in congestion reaching as far as the A41 three miles away.
 - ii) The congestion will have a detrimental effect on the delivery of Emergency Services. The A413 is a major 24 hour Emergency Ambulance Service Route between Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury and High Wycombe Hospital conveying heart patients between the A & E Department at Stoke Mandeville and the Cardiac Department at High Wycombe Hospital. Congestion in London Road Wendover will also impact on the commute to work as well as the journey times to local Health Care facilities located in Wendover. Visiting the shops in Wendover will become a more onerous task with the increase in journey time resultant on the congestion caused.
 - iii) The chalk dust from the construction of the scheduled works will cause unacceptable nuisance to your Petitioners and their property and it is

inconceivable that the whole construction area can be kept damp to prevent the dust travelling.

- iv) Your Petitioners object to the use of balancing ponds in the Chiltern AONB as these will drastically alter the unique character of the area.
- v) Air quality will deteriorate to a level of severe discomfort and hazard to health through exhaust fumes from the large number of HGV's and plant using the A413, the storage and transportation of the many thousands of tonnes of chalk at the Hunts Green Farm dump site and the dust arising from the excavation of the viaduct and the embankment.
- vi) Construction work, plant and spoil movements will produce substantial noise and vibration, leading to difficulties in concentration during the day and sleep disruption at night.
- vii) The construction areas and compounds will be brightly lit for extended periods which in this area of little artificial light will make sleep at night difficult.
- viii) Your Petitioners are concerned that although the Code of Construction Practice may have been written to the highest standard, enforcement will not be practical without enforceable independent monitoring by District Councils and fast track arrangements made for the raising and resolution of breaches.

Damage following completion:

13. Your Petitioners aver that the operation of HS2 following the completion of the proposed scheduled works would have the following permanent effects:
- i) Your Petitioners' view of The Chilterns AONB would be permanently scarred by the construction of two viaducts and an embankment with heights ranging from 10 to 18 meters and the associated catenaries on top of that. The line would be visible from numerous viewpoints and particularly from your Petitioners' home.

- ii) The effect of trains up to 400 meters in length running as frequently as every 2 minutes will totally destroy the tranquility of the area.
- iii) The noise from these trains will cause an intolerable strain upon your Petitioners' lives.

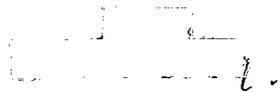
Mitigation:

- 14. Your Petitioners seek Voluntary Purchase of their property. If Your Honorable House deems this proposal unacceptable, then your Petitioners seek compensation by way of sound insulation, the provision of fibreoptic Broadband, connection to a Mains Sewage System and financial compensation for loss of amenity and diminution in value of their property. Current proposals only provide for compensation to be paid two years after train operation commences i.e. 2028. By said date your petitioners will be 89/87 years old and we seek further amendment to said proposals to allow for interim payments to be paid from the commencement of the scheduled works.
- 15. Your Petitioners draw the attention of your Honorable House to the fact that, in the Southern section of the AONB, the specification of the route has been altered to include tunneling by way of mitigation. This provision has not been afforded to the Northern section in which your Petitioners reside. Your Petitioners aver that The Chilterns AONB should be tunneled throughout.

YOUR PETITIONERS therefore 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 Counsel, Agent and witnesses in support of the allegations of this Petition against such of the clauses and provisions of the Bill as affect the rights and interests of your Petitioners and in support of such other clauses, amendments or provisions as may be necessary or expedient for their protection, or that such other relief may be given to your Petitioners as your Honourable House may deem meet.

AND your Petitioners will ever pray, etc.

[signed]



Michael Victor Coventry



Sigrid Renate Coventry

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PETITION OF: *Michael Victor Coventry and Sigrid Renate Coventry*

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