

IN PARLIAMENT  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
SESSION 2013-14

HIGH SPEED 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 The London Transport Users Committee, known as London TravelWatch.

SHEWETH as follows:

1. A Bill (hereinafter referred to as “the Bill”) has been introduced and is now pending in your honourable House intitulated “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.
3. The Bill proposes to rebuild Euston station and provide a new interchange station at Old Oak Common, as well as disapply statutory closure provisions in relation to the construction of HS2. These proposals are not optimally provided and we petition for amendments to the relevant clauses.
4. Your Petitioners are the London Transport Users Committee (known as London TravelWatch). London Transport Users Committee was established as a body corporate on 3 July 2000 under provisions in the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (Commencement No 4 and Adaptation) Order 2000. We are a statutory Board of Members with a remit to represent the travelling public in the London area. Specifically, Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch a duty to consider – and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable to make recommendations with respect to – any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight). Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon the Committee to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.
5. Your Petitioners are not opposed to the principle of the development of a high speed railway as set out in the Bill. However, your Petitioners’ interests are

injuriously affected by some aspects of the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

6. London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public, including the users of all forms of public transport in the capital. It has a strong interest in the interchanges and facilities available at the London end of the HS2 route. Its role includes a remit to:
  - Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media;
  - Consult with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users;
  - Conduct primary or secondary research and evidence gathering, in accordance with our remit to investigate any matter it appears to us we ought to investigate; and
  - Investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers.

London TravelWatch's aim is to achieve a better travel experience for all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region. London TravelWatch is sponsored by the Greater London Authority.

7. The impact of HS2 for London's travelling public will be significant. An estimated 15 million passengers per annum will arrive in London that would otherwise have travelled by air or road. There will also be passengers who will transfer from other rail routes, notably from the East Midlands. This will place a significant extra burden on existing facilities, especially in the Euston area, and on passenger access to connecting transport services.
8. The effect on passengers of the extra numbers of people using London Underground from Euston or Euston Square, without additional public transport provision, would be injurious in terms of additional crowding and extended journey times, resulting from the additional traffic generated by HS2. Sections of the lines from Euston are already amongst the most congested on the London Underground network<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, in considering this Bill, we pray that you will consider requiring the provision of such measures as are necessary to mitigate this risk. In particular we ask that such provisions be made for the Chelsea-Hackney (Crossrail 2) safeguarded route to be altered to include a Crossrail 2 station at Euston.

### **Euston station layout and facilities**

9. At Euston itself, as shown in Schedule 1, Works Nos. 1/1 to 1/5 inclusive, the layout and design of the new station will be critical to the success or otherwise of HS2. It is imperative that the needs of passengers, including those with disabilities, are given priority. The current layout of Euston station includes many levels, with significant numbers of steps, which are a barrier to use by people with temporary or permanent mobility impairments, as well as an extra

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<sup>1</sup> Greater London Authority, Too Close for Comfort 2010

obstacle for those travelling with luggage or young children. The redevelopment of Euston station provides a unique opportunity to change this for the better. With the extra passenger numbers expected, it will be of fundamental importance to get this right.

10. Our research<sup>2</sup> has confirmed the importance passengers place on the layout and usability of stations, and as such the design of Euston station will be a determinant of the success or failure of HS2 in the eyes of the public.
11. The ease with which pedestrians can walk to, from or around Euston station is important both to passengers and the local community as large railway terminals can both be valuable assets for a community or a significant barrier to movement and blight a community. The redevelopment of Euston station has the potential to significantly improve the environs of Somers Town, and the provision of a level walking route from each compass point of the station, with access to the station from each corner of the station, along with walking routes through the station, is imperative. It is important that all walking routes included in the design of the station are level, without steps..
12. The interchange options from HS2 at Euston, whether to another rail service, the Underground stations at Euston or Euston Square, bus, taxi, cycling, the walking route to St Pancras and King's Cross or the new Crossrail 2 service should all be as seamless as possible. Again, level walking routes without steps are a critical factor supported strongly by our research<sup>3</sup>. In particular the interchange from Euston National Rail/HS2 station to Euston Square Underground station should form a continuous link away from street level, such that the passenger is not aware that they are separate stations. Similarly, the projected Crossrail 2 station at Euston could allow construction of a below ground walking route between Euston and King's Cross/St. Pancras stations that avoids crossing busy roads for passengers with children and/or heavy luggage.
13. The interchange with the bus station at the front of the national rail station should be significantly improved. The re-design of the interchange to allow passengers to board a bus in any direction without crossing carriageways or navigating steps will be a key factor to the attractiveness of this interchange for all users, particularly those with sensory or mobility impairments, or those with heavy luggage or young children. It will reduce risk to pedestrians and assist with the dispersal of passengers using HS2.

### **Old Oak Common**

14. Old Oak Common, as shown in Schedule 1, Works No. 1/15 and associated Works, has the potential to be one of the country's biggest and most useful interchanges, and to relieve pressure on the dispersal routes from Euston HS2 station in a significant way, both during construction and permanently thereafter. With relatively minimal infrastructure enhancements, one station can

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<sup>2</sup> London TravelWatch, The London Travelling Environment: what consumers think 2013

<sup>3</sup> London TravelWatch, Value for Money on London's transport services: what consumers think 2013

be created that serves HS2, Crossrail, the West London Line, the North London Line and the Great Western Main Line. As with Euston, this station will be defined by the range of interchange options and the quality of facilities. If Old Oak Common station is designed from the outset as a major interchange, it should become an extremely attractive route for many passengers to avoid central London, significantly easing the pressure there. However, at present the plans for this station do not include the provision for the deviation of the West London Line, or the provision of a direct link from Crossrail to the West Coast Main Line. A reversing bay at Old Oak Common would also improve the resilience of the Great Western Main Line and Crossrail, reducing the impact on existing passengers. These measures would have a significant impact on reducing the potential injurious disbenefit to transport users of routes serving Euston, both during the construction period and beyond.

### **Railway Closure Provisions**

15. It is not clear to your petitioners whether Clause 39, Disapplication of statutory closure provisions, applies only to services provided by or on HS2, or could be used more widely to services that operate on lines that would be affected by the construction of HS2. During the construction period there may be a potential issue because of the needs and effects of tunneling. Under current legislation if it was necessary to close the line between Old Oak Common and South Ruislip, currently served by occasional Chiltern services, the Secretary of State would have to consult your petitioners under schedule 7 of the 2005 Railways Act. It is not clear if Clause 39 would give the Secretary of State the power to circumvent this process both for this line or others affected by the HS2 proposal. In order to protect the interests of those passengers who are potentially harmfully and without redress affected by these closures, we pray that you would review or revoke these clauses to ensure that passengers so affected have a due process to make their representations to your petitioners and to enable your petitioners to discharge their lawfully constituted functions.
16. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, clause 39 so far affecting your Petitioners, should not be allowed to pass into law, and schedule 1 should be amended
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 interests and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioners.

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 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.

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AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

Stephen Locke, Chair, London Transport Users Committee (known as London  
TravelWatch), c