

IN PARLIAMENT  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
SESSION 2013-14

**HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL**

**PETITION**

**Against the Bill – 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 ANGELA ANDERSEN and ELSPETH HARRISON**

**SHEWETH as follows:**

1. A Bill (hereinafter called "the Bill") has been introduced into 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. 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. Your Petitioners are owners of property in Albert Street numbers 118 and 127 respectively which have been issued with compulsory acquisition orders for the cellars. (Notice No: C271/009265)

Petitioner AA has lived in the same house since 1971 and petitioner EH has lived in the area for 47 years and in the present house since 1990.

5. Your Petitioners and their rights, interests and property may be injuriously affected by the disturbance to their foundations by activities outlined in the Bill.

6. We object to the Bill on the grounds that our properties and our lives may be damaged by the proposed works in the following ways:

### **Damage to our Buildings**

Albert Street is 100m from the proposed HS2 route and is lined on both sides (from numbers 9-139) by early Victorian Grade 2 listed buildings and lies within a Conservation Area. The buildings have little or no foundations and both of us have experienced serious cracking and movement when the buildings next door to us were built - one in 1975/6 when the Kings Fund built their new premises next to number 118, and the other when the Jewish Museum was constructed. In both cases extensive repairs were required necessitating temporary rehousing. This illustrates how vulnerable our houses are. If our streets are to be used then HS2 should undertake to monitor all properties prior to construction and offer proper compensation to property owners for any repairs made necessary by vibration and excavation damage.

According to English Heritage there are 375,000 Grade 2 listed buildings in the UK representing just 1.8% of all residential homes so we need to protect these historic buildings. In Albert Street there are over 100 individual Grade 2 listed properties not the 12 suggested by HS2. We contend that disturbance of the cellars and vibration caused by the works will damage these fragile homes. We believe that our cellars are grade 2 listed as well as the houses.

### **Increases in Air Pollution**

In Camden we are already at the upper limit of air pollution. Although HS2 argues that pollutants will be kept "as low a level as reasonably practicable" (S.4.4.1) it is a qualification that makes any commitment on their part meaningless. We fear that pollutants - specifically Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) will pose a genuine health risk to local residents. Since we are now pensioners this may well mean for the rest of our lives! There are also many families with young children in the street and several schools in the area. Any increase in Pollution is unacceptable.

We have been told to expect an increase of 30% in traffic down our street. This is an enormous amount. We would like to ensure that there is no increase in heavy goods vehicles and that any vehicles that are used have zero emissions. Project materials should be confined to rail delivery.

## **Increases in Noise Pollution**

In our view the list of works permitted outside the Core Hours (s.2.4.9) is too broad and leaves scope for work to continue on a 24 hour basis. Clarification should be made which prohibits noise generating work close to residential areas (i.e. within 200m) outside the Core Hours and provision should be made for fines to be imposed if these hours are exceeded.

## **Unfair Compensation**

It is clear that there will be sustained damage to the local area for 10 -15 years. The present compensation plans for Camden compared with those in rural areas are derisory. At present Albert Street is a quiet, pleasant residential street - to claim urban dwellers are accustomed already to high levels of noise and dirt such that we will not notice the additional impact over years of HS2 construction is manifestly untrue and inaccurate. HS2 has shown no understanding of this area. Compensation should be assessed at the same level for the same loss wherever it occurs rural or urban.

It is clear that the disruption and destruction caused by HS2 over a 10 or more year period cannot be termed 'temporary'.

## **New Designs for Euston Station**

There are many different plans for Euston Station which have not been fully investigated. We have been alarmed by the suggestion that much of the spare land will be used for development in order to help finance the project. This so called 'land grab' of '35 acres' includes the loss of green areas, the destruction of a cemetery with up to 50,000 bodies (St James Church Yard) and many local amenities.

We are also concerned about the alteration to our social fabric. This area is densely populated and multicultural. It contains both social and non-social housing and many small businesses. It has taken generations to develop this harmonious and successful community. We object strongly to the description of the area by Sir David Higgins as "a deprived neighbourhood needing regeneration". This is blatantly untrue and suggests that he has never visited the area and simply views us as development land! Now it is proposed to drive an additional enormous train track through it which will not even fulfil the aim of the initial project i.e. to connect the North of England with HS1 and the rest of Europe. All of the disruption, noise, dirt, pollution and destruction to this area stems from the decision by HS2 to use Euston as the London terminus. All of this would be prevented if the terminus were to be sited at Old Oak Common

We would like to request a temporary halt for HS2 at Old Oak Common while more detailed plans for Euston are considered and the issues we have raised are resolved.

7. 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.

8. 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.

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 Council, 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.

Angela Andersen and Elspeth Harrison

