

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

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 CHRISTOPHER BENNETT LANGTON

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, 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 (“the Authorised Works”) are specified in clauses 1 and 2 of and Schedule 1 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 the Bill.

- 7 Your Petitioner is Christopher Bennett Langton. My property (426 Cromwell Lane) is situated 125 metres from the proposed line and therefore 5 metres outside of the Voluntary Purchase Scheme. I have lived here for 31 years, am widowed and retired.
- 8 Your Petitioner and my rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
- 9 Your Petitioner asserts I will be specially and directly affected by the construction phase which is expected to last for up to 7 years. My property is surrounded on one side by the building of the cut and cover tunnel, to front and rear by construction compounds, and on the fourth side by HGV traffic movements of up to 60 per day. The access road to one of the construction compounds passes within 20 metres of the house. This will result in noise, dust, air pollution, light pollution, vibration from truck movements and visual intrusion.
- 10 Your Petitioner will be subjected to extensive traffic congestion outside my property due to the proposed one-way traffic light controlled bridge on Cromwell Lane. During periods of complete closure at nights and weekends it will result in a 3 mile diversion to reach the north side of Burton Green and Coventry.
- 11 Your Petitioner is likely to be subject to living next to a 'ghetto' of unoccupied houses during the construction phase as those within the 60 and 120 metre boundaries of the proposed compensation scheme sell up and move.
- 12 Your Petitioner asserts that as a result of the aforementioned, and the fact that I will be in my 80's by the time the project is completed, I am specially and directly affected by the build phase as I am unable to sell my property, downsize and enjoy my retirement as I choose to. Burton Green has minimal bus services and no shops and amenities so once unable to drive and due to vagaries of the Exceptional Hardship Scheme and proposed Need to Sell Scheme, I am effectively a prisoner in my home until I either need to go into a nursing home or die.
- 13 Your Petitioner requests that the Voluntary Purchase Scheme is extended to include my property. For information there are a further 13 properties similarly affected. All fall within a 'natural' cut off point beyond which there are no further houses for several hundred metres. Ten of the owners are of similar pensionable age to myself and equally affected. (For reference the full list of properties is: 426,428,323,327,329 Cromwell Lane, all postcode CV8 1PG and Cornerways, 2 The Hollies, 1 The Hollies, Ashorne, Kelrenny, Lanthorn House, Coniston, 4 Seatons Field, Stonegate, Red Lane, all postcode CV81PF)
- 14 Your Petitioner asserts that Burton Green is arguably the most affected community outside of London and this section to the south of the line particularly so, and therefore qualifies for exceptional treatment.
- 15 Your Petitioner asserts that the only other alternative to mitigate the above affects is the provision of a deep bored tunnel – Option F within HS2 documents. In addition it would preserve the community of Burton Green, obviate the need for a replacement Village Hall and compensation to numerous residents. It would preserve the Green Belt and ancient woodland, protect the safety and viability of the local Primary School. It would avoid traffic disruption to commuters and protect the ongoing amenity of the Greenway.
- 16 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, the Bill so far as affecting your Petitioner, should not be allowed to pass into law.
- 17 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, interests and property and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioner.

YOUR PETITIONER 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 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.



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PETITION OF CHRISTOPHER BENNETT
LANGTON

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

Christopher Bennett Langton

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