

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 Wendover Cricket Club

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 Wendover Cricket Club is represented by its management committee and trustees. The Club was formed in 1865, and the purposes of the Club are to foster and promote participation in the amateur sport of cricket within the community, providing facilities for playing cricket, opportunities for recreation, coaching and competition and other sports and recreations. The Club runs up to seven junior teams, three senior teams, a Village Cup for local organisations consisting of twelve teams, together with an associated Bridge Club and fund raising 200 Club, as well as links with local schools; to enable all this to happen, the club operates from two grounds which are in close proximity to each other. Your petitioner has 410 members, many of whom live or work in the area that will be affected by the construction and operation of the railway authorised by the Bill and your petitioner’s responsibilities extend to that area. Your petitioner owns the freehold of the property at Ellesborough Road, as well as leasehold property at Witchell.

The Club is recognised by Aylesbury Vale District Council as a consultee on planning applications, highway works and other matters affecting the area in which those whom it represents live. HS2 have engaged with the Club, and it’s Agents regarding potential relocation from the Ellesborough Road ground.

Your petitioner’s freehold property is within the limits of land to be acquired and used as shown on the plans deposited with the Bill, and the property is therefore liable to compulsory acquisition under the Bill.

The property currently comprises a cricket ground, pavilion, practice nets, a machine shed (for storage of mowers, ground maintenance equipment etc), car parking and pasture, together with outbuildings for livestock.

Your petitioner’s leasehold property is not within the limits of land to be acquired and used, but may be affected by the construction activities including noise, dirt, dust etc and once HS2 is operational, the property’s relative proximity to the line may be significantly affected by noise etc.

8 Your Petitioner and their rights, interests and property are injuriously

affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

9 a) Although your petitioner is aware that the Select Committee of your honourable House is unable to consider cases which object to the principle of the Bill, your petitioner wishes to express its objection to the principle. Your petitioner is seriously concerned over the business case of HS2, particularly the fact that it represents poor value for money to the taxpayer, in a country which cannot afford such expenses. Your petitioner instead supports the alternative solution to HS2 produced by 51m. This alternative represents a much better business case including lower initial costs and a much greater Benefit Cost Ratio, as reported by WS Atkins working for the Department of Transport. (<http://www.51m.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/update-on-51m-Alternative-summary-with-Annex.pdf>).

b) Your petitioner is concerned about the impacts of the works authorised by the Bill on the grounds used by Wendover Cricket Club. The current proposals will result in the cessation of cricket at Ellesborough Road.

Your petitioner requests that the Secretary of State gives consideration to a fully bored tunnel that would not interfere with the Club's activities during construction or operation, which your petitioner believes will alleviate many if not all of the problems that the Club will face under the current proposals. If a fully bored tunnel is decided upon, your petitioner requests that this be constructed having due regard to the impact of the Club's cricket grounds, minimising the effects and disruption upon the Clubs activities.

In the event that a fully bored tunnel is not opted for, your petitioner requests that the Secretary of State fully relocates the Club to a site within Wendover at a suitable site that will not result in detriment to the Club and in accordance with the following comments.

c) Your petitioner currently plays cricket at Ellesborough Road, a site which provides the Club with the following:

- i. A ground of approximately 13,530 square metres suitable for senior league cricket
- ii. A middle "square" which provides for 12 pitches, or "strips" (as playing is rotated through the season over the different strips)
- iii. A well-draining playing field which is equipped with water supply.
- iv. A pavilion of approximately 125 square metres which is fully serviced with water and electricity, septic tank drainage and provides changing rooms, showers, toilets, kitchen, bar and ancillary areas, together with an integral score board
- v. A machine shed of approximately 22 square metres, which is a purpose built brick built construction, used for the storage of equipment for ground maintenance.

- vi. Two synthetic modern practice nets
- vii. Car parking of approximately 2,145 square metres suitable for some 35 vehicles which is shielded from the cricket ground.
- viii. An ancillary field of approximately 7,570 square metres, currently occupied as a horse field, but owned by the Club with the possibility for use as expansion space as a second smaller pitch.

And your petitioner is concerned by the loss of these facilities.

Your petitioner requests that the Secretary of State provides an alternative site in accordance with the following points:

- ix. A new ground with a minimum of 16,000 square metres, of a suitable location, shape, layout, gradient and topography, to conform with ECB (England & Wales Cricket Board) guidelines, and be suitable for senior league cricket.
- x. The ground should provide a square of at least 12 pitches or "strips"
- xi. A fully drained playing field including square which is equipped with water supply.
- xii. An adjacent pavilion of at least 125 square metres, providing similar changing rooms, showers, toilets, kitchen, bar and ancillary areas, which is fully serviced with water and electricity and with suitable drainage provision, and a replacement scoreboard of at least similar size and quality to the existing one and conforming to ECB standards.
- xiii. A machine shed of similar or better size and quality suitable for safely and securely housing the ground maintenance equipment.
- xiv. At least two modern practice nets
- xv. Suitable contiguous car parking which is shielded, for at least 35 vehicles, as well as a suitable access road from the public road.
- xvi. Adjacent land which provides the option for a second ground.

d) Your petitioner is the only cricket club in Wendover and, as stated above, has many members of all ages and is a focal point for the community. Your petitioner is concerned that any relocation away from the town will be to the detriment of the club, resulting in loss of membership and consequently affect the continuity and financial viability of the club.

Your petitioner therefore requests that any relocation by the Secretary of State be within Wendover.

e) Your petitioner operates a smaller ground at the Witchell, which is a short distance away (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile) from the main Ellesborough Road ground. The proximity of the two grounds is essential for the operation of the club in terms of shared facilities, equipment, amenities etc.

Your petitioner therefore requests that any relocation by the Secretary of State be within a reasonably similar and suitable distance of the Witchell ground in order to maintain this associated viability. If this does not prove to be

possible, then the additional land acquired (see c) xvi) should be converted into a second cricket ground and the other facilities provided (e.g. practice nets, pavilion, parking, etc.) should be modified and adapted to so as to be suitable for 2 matches to run concurrently.

f) Your petitioner is concerned about the effects of the scheme, in terms of its construction and operation, on the playing of cricket at the Witchell ground, in terms of disturbance caused by physical factors such as noise, dirt, dust, and other inconveniences such as road closures etc. during the construction of the line, as well as the noise that will emanate from the line and trains once it is operational.

Your petitioner requests that the Secretary of State fully mitigates the effects of these factors on the playing of cricket at the Witchell, including full uninterrupted access to the ground at all times, in particular evenings and weekends. Additionally, the maintenance of the Witchell ground is serviced from the machine shed at Ellesborough Road; your petitioner further requests that all the appropriate and necessary measures are effected and fully funded by HS2, if different to the current arrangements, to ensure this ground continues to be maintained.

g) Your petitioner is also concerned about the construction works in the vicinity and their effects on the playing of cricket at Ellesborough Road.

Your petitioner requests that the playing of cricket at Ellesborough Road is unhindered during construction works, including unrestricted access to the ground and no disturbances during playing from noise, dirt, dust etc.

h) Your petitioner is aware that HS2 would like to relocate the Club from Ellesborough Road. Your petitioner is concerned of the timescale involved in such a relocation, as any new ground will need to be fully prepared with new turf, pitches / strips, drainage and left but still maintained in accordance with ECB guidelines before play is possible. We have estimated that after the installation of the 12 pitch square, this process will take 18 to 24 months. HS2 were fully informed of this over 3 years ago in your petitioner's letter to them dated 21st April 2011, as well as being reiterated in subsequent letters and discussions. Your petitioner is concerned that even now, a new site has not been identified. Your petitioner does not want to be forced to have a break in any of its cricketing activities because a new ground is not available due to delays by HS2/the Secretary of State. Furthermore, temporary relocation is not an option your petitioner would be happy with.

Your petitioner therefore requests that any transfer to a new ground occurs at the same time as possession of Ellesborough Road is taken by HS2 so that there is no interruption in cricket playing and that the new ground is provided in a fully equipped and playable state and condition.

- 10 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 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 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.

20 May 2014

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IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

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(LONDON-WEST MIDLANDS)
BILL

PETITION OF WENDOVER CRICKET CLUB

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

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