

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 **Stuart Robert Griffiths & Jennifer Anne Griffiths**,

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.

*Clauses of the Bill*

- 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.

*Your Petitioner*

- 7 Your Petitioners own a property in Helmdon Road, Greatworth which will be adversely affected by the operation and construction of the project outlined in the Bill. The Petitioners' rights, property and interests are injuriously affected by the Bill to which your Petitioners object and the reasons amongst others, hereinafter appear.

*Your Petitioner's Concerns*

- 8 **SUMMARY:** Your Petitioners have numerous concerns related to traffic issues, road closures, the location of the Greatworth Satellite Compound, noise, dust, light, vibration, working hours, compensation and visual impact. These concerns are detailed below.
- 9 Your Petitioners are extremely concerned about the influx of construction workers accessing the Greatworth Satellite Compound site and the impact this will have on the local road network. There will be a significant increase in daily traffic on small narrow country roads, particularly on the already busy and deteriorating B4525, which struggles to cope and carry heavy goods vehicles that use it at present. It is proposed that during the 6 years of construction, there will be more than 200 workers using the Greatworth Satellite Compound and a projected increase of construction traffic of 280-400 cars/LGV's and 160-240 HGV's per day during that period. Your Petitioners are concerned that this increase in traffic will produce an additional risk to the local roads, creating more congestion, deterioration and pollution to the surrounding area. Your Petitioners request that all construction traffic and workers associated with the HS2 construction, use specific routes that avoid passing through Greatworth village and that these are strictly enforced.
- 10 Your Petitioners are concerned about the closure of the Helmdon Road to the North of Greatworth village. This road closure into the

village, will exacerbate the amount of traffic through the village centre, as all inhabitants from the North side of the village will have no option but to drive through the centre of Greatworth, past the school, to exit the village. Your Petitioners request that this road closure is kept to the absolute minimum during the construction period.

- 11 Your Petitioners are concerned about the position and impact of the Satellite Compound being in close proximity to the village of Greatworth and believe that Public Rights of Way and local open space will be subjected to intense construction activity. This will produce serious effects by noise, dust and vibration and have severe visual impacts for Helmdon Road and Astral Row residents. This in turn results in a reduction in the quality of life for your Petitioners and other nearby residents, thus restricting the use of local open space and Public Right of Ways. It will also have an impact on the viability of businesses at Greatworth Hall and Greatworth Park and both staff and pupils at Greatworth Primary School and Greatworth Pre-School will endure more difficulties with the delivery of lessons. Your Petitioners request that the Compound be re-located to another position along the route of HS2, of which there are many miles which are away from any inhabitants or communities.
- 12 Your Petitioners are concerned that during construction, the effects of noise, dust and light pollution are not being monitored. Your Petitioners request that during the entire construction period, there be monitoring equipment in place on at least two places within the village, such as Astral Row and lower Helmdon Road and that a monitoring programme is set up and agreed with South Northants District Council. If during this time, any of the monitoring thresholds are exceeded, work should cease immediately, until provision for rectification can be made.
- 13 Your Petitioners are concerned by the level of noise produced during the construction period, even though the Promoters considered that noise mitigation is not necessary when average noise levels are below 50 decibels. Your Petitioners believe that background noise in rural areas is much lower than in urban areas and that where this is the case, a level of 50 decibels can be up to 25 decibels above the background noise level. It is unreasonable to set the same level of noise for mitigation in a rural area as in an urban area. The suggested night time noise levels may well be at a level that provokes the disruption of sleep. Your Petitioners request that additional mitigation for noise levels in rural areas is provided, in order to keep the noise threshold below 40 decibels during the day and 35 decibels at night and those residents within 500 metres from the proposed route of HS2, be provided with extra glazing to their properties, to compensate for the increase in noise.

- 14 Your Petitioners are concerned with and object strongly to the working hours set out in the draft Code of Construction Practice, which sets out that during the construction of the green tunnel, work is allowed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your Petitioners and other Greatworth residents will be subjected to exposure of noise, dust, vibration and lighting at all times, which could continue for many years. This has health implications, for not only sleep disruption, but also a reduction in simple life-style enjoyment, such as sitting outside. Your Petitioners request that construction work time is reduced to avoid night time and evening work and curtailed at the weekends.
- 15 Your Petitioners object strongly to the insubstantial and inadequate compensation scheme. The position of the Petitioners's property has been de-valued due to the proposed proximity of HS2 route, but is outside the proposed, current 300 metres limit for compensation. Your Petitioners query why their own personal wealth should be reduced due to a consequence of the HS2 Bill and request that where there is a clear demonstration of the reduction in the value of their property due to this, then compensation should be paid accordingly.
- 16 Your Petitioners are concerned about the height of the proposed route of HS2 in its proximity to Greatworth. At first when the Greatworth green tunnel was proposed, the height of the line and the length of the green tunnel offered a reasonable mitigation to those living nearest. However, the design of the route was changed in 2012, which included raising the line by 8 metres, thus shortening the length of the green tunnel. Your Petitioners believe that concerns of noise, vibration and visual impact of the route would be reduced by reverting to or exceeding the original depth of the line and length of the green tunnel, thus shielding residents from daily operational effects.

#### *Conclusion*

- 17 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your Petitioners, the Bill should not be allowed to pass into law.
- 18 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.

Stuart Robert Griffiths

Jennifer Anne Griffiths

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BILL

PETITION OF

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