

IN PARLIAMENT  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
SESSION (2013-2014)

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 Judith Anne Stancombe

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 a freehold owner of 'Clematis' and has lived in Dunsmore for 20 years. Your petitioner is a married mother of two working part time while also caring for my very elderly mother. Dunsmore is a very small rural settlement which enjoys superb tranquility, as well as benefiting from low levels of light and noise pollution. The settlement has no mains drainage, no gas and thankfully no street lighting. The settlement is approached both ways by a single-track road and being the highest settlement in the Chilterns is obviously approached by a steep hill from the A413. Living in Dunsmore is like being on holiday all the time, its tranquility and walks both being fantastic.
- 8 Your Petitioners rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
- 9 Your Petitioner avers that she is will be seriously and adversely affected during both the construction phase and then during operation. Dunsmore has been included by HS2 Ltd in bilateral and forum meetings in recognition of the serious impacts of the HS2 proposal and line.

Current and future problems caused by the proposal for an HS2 line through the ANOB

Twenty years ago your petitioner and her husband saw their dream house nestled in the heart of the Chilterns, being the parents of a two year old and a three month old. Immediately we loved the area and set about restoring our dream house. We always knew it would be the place we would stay until old age, being the most ideal place you could want to live, work and bring up two children. The house now forms a valuable part of our future investment and retirement, which will be significantly devalued by the construction and operation of HS2.

Your petitioner works for the NHS in Amersham. I need to get to work on time. With the construction phase of HS2 I am seriously considering whether I will be able to continue with this. A couple of months ago there was a fatal crash on the A413 and it took me over two hours to travel the ten miles to work because of the sheer volume of traffic. The whole area was gridlocked. I fear this will be the same every day with the construction work.

I also care for my ninety year old mother who lives in Wendover. She needs to be cared for daily. I do this myself to avoid costs to the State. I need to be able to get there quickly at any time of the day. Again with major construction work this is just simply not going to happen. I do not have enough time to sit waiting in long queues.

I walk twice a day to exercise our two flat coat retrievers. This is my relaxation. One of the reasons for living here as previously mentioned is the tranquility. We are surrounded by beautiful walks through superb beech woods. The silence is only broken by the sound of bird song. I just cannot imagine how this will be affected by up to thirty six trains an hour thundering along. I sometimes walk to see my mother in Wendover. Many footpaths are due to be closed and I will be unable to use the footpath currently used to get to Wendover. I also have absolutely no desire to walk amongst construction dust and put my life at risk. I am also very concerned about the poor air quality and noise.

Our two children are now both at University. They have both worked extremely hard and earned themselves places at excellent universities. We had always hoped to be able to help them with a deposit for their first houses. Very sadly this will no longer be an option due to the significant decrease, through absolutely no fault of our own, in the value of our own home. We will be unable to sell our home due to it being blighted by HS2 and the ridiculous compensation scheme that is in place.

To conclude, I feel the government is blissfully unaware of my plight and many others. They do not care about the emotional, health and financial consequences that face everyone who is affected by HS2. I feel very passionately about where I live and feel my life has been blighted. I just cannot imagine the destruction of our AONB, which wrongly I thought was protected? Just going about daily life will be severely affected. I also feel there are many issues that are being hidden in jargon by the powers that be. I thought we lived in a democratic society but I now know we do not.

Your Petitioner avers that the operation of HS2 following the completion of the proposed scheduled works would have the following permanent effects:

1. Reduction in property value.
2. Desecrated environment visually and auditory. Loss of tranquility and local amenities

Your Petitioner opines that HS2 Ltd should in dealing with such problems as listed above have adopted the maxim of, Avoidance followed by Mitigation and if not possible then Compensation. In the view of your Petitioner they have done none of these in their current plans.

Hierarchy of Remedial Measures:

1. A fully bored tunnel through the whole of the AONB. Whilst the Southern section of the AONB has received tunneling by way of mitigation this protection has been denied to the Northern section. All excavated, spoil and waste material should be removed from the AONB.
2. Failing a fully bored tunnel, an enclosed structure similar to the Arup concept enclosure would be required on the 2 viaducts, Wendover Dene, and Smalldean, and on the embankment, to ensure people would neither see nor hear the trains. At the same time the electricity supply should be buried and pylons should be got rid of. Every crossing point should be designed as green bridges and we need world-class design for viaducts etc for this specific setting.
3. The Code of Construction Practice should be legally binding with an independent overseer.
4. The proposed compensation scheme is unfair and must be improved.

The impact on Dunsmore has not been acknowledged, or properly assessed in ES. There has been a failure to comprehend the topographical nature of the Misbourne valley.

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 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 Petitioner will ever pray, &c.

Signature of Petitioner



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BILL

PETITION OF JUDITH ANNE  
STANCOMBE

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

Judith Anne Stancombe

