

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 Sarah Brooks, Graham Adams, Dr. Susan Weller, Robert Stephenson, Robert Cash, Janine Cash, Karen Newbold, Colin Tobin, Geoffrey Herbert, Jennavie Herbert and Steve James

SHEWETH as follows:-

1 A Bill (hereinafter referred to as “the Bill”) has been introduced and is now pending in your honourable House entitled “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 dis-apply 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 Petitioners are owners of canal boats, moored in Harefield Marina and along the Grand Union Canal towpath between Denham Lock and Widewater Lock. The boats are for many of your petitioners', their sole and permanent residence and for the remainder, a second home or weekend retreat. This is currently a tranquil, scenic rural environment comprising a close-knit village community on the London periphery.

Your petitioners' homes are adjacent to the planned construction site of the viaduct and the proposed Machine Storage Depot to be located on Moorhall Road next to the Horse and Barge Public House. Part of Harefield Marina is likely to be acquired for the construction of the viaduct, this may result in some of your petitioners losing their current mooring and having to relocate. Your petitioners have lived or owned boats at this location for up to 18 years.

Your petitioners are located specifically in this area, many for their work, some have children at a local pre-school and others are here for their retirement in this quiet rural area. One of your petitioners works mainly in the marina painting boats. Your petitioners' boats are all at this location, either as full or part time homes, because of the rural setting and access to surrounding countryside.

Your petitioners are regular users of Harvil Road, which will be closed for seven years and is to be used for sustainable placement of spoil. Moorhall Road, New Years Green Lane and other local roads, which your petitioners use regularly, will see increased traffic because of the Harvil Road closure and use by a high volume of HGVs and other works vehicles. This is likely to adversely affect the lives and livelihoods of the petitioners and other canal and local residents in Harefield.

Your petitioners are regular users of the Grand Union Canal and the towpath alongside, as it passes under the proposed viaduct adjacent to Harefield Outdoor Activities Centre (HOAC). Your petitioners also regularly use public rights of way around HOAC, Denham Quarry, Colne Valley Country Park, the old track and paths towards Bayshurst Woods, Broadwater Nature Reserve and also the ancient Shire Lane track near West Hyde.

During construction, your petitioners in Harefield marina and on the alongside canal will be surrounded by intolerable construction activity, totally destroying the scenic, tranquil environment. Your petitioners, who live an outdoor and low-impact, sustainable lifestyle on their boats, will suffer intolerable noise and air pollution, access restrictions and increased journey times for at least seven years. This will be disruptive to daily life, particularly commuting to work and accessing local educational and health services. After construction, your petitioners' homes will be adjacent to the proposed viaduct and therefore will continue to endure intolerable noise and be subject to permanently spoiled

views and poorer environmental quality.

Your petitioners believe that the construction work and the completed railway will have a devastating effect on their quality of life, their (and their children's) health, the surrounding communities and environment.

8 Your petitioner's rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

9 Your petitioner opposes the Bill in principle. Whilst your petitioner acknowledges that the principle of the Bill is established at second reading, your petitioners' views on the subject are so strong, they must be recorded in this petition.

10. Your petitioners object in principle because of the following reasons. Your petitioner's are seriously concerned over the business case of HS2, particularly the fact that it represents poor value for money to the tax payer, the majority who will not benefit from HS2. Your petitioners support the alternative solution to HS2 produced by 51m, this represents a far better business case including substantially lower initial costs and a much greater Benefit Cost Ratio, as reported by WS Atkins for the Department of Transport. Your petitioner's object to the loss of local business and amenities that will be caused by HS2.

Viaduct

11. Your petitioners are gravely concerned about the impact of the proposed viaduct which will pass across the HOAC sailing lake adjacent to the marina and then across the bottom corner of the marina before continuing over the Grand Union Canal, Savay lake and Moorhall Road to the nature Reserve. The Viaduct will be a massive blight on the landscape, visible for miles around, particularly to your petitioners and other boat owners in the marina or using the towpath moorings.

During construction your petitioners will be immediately adjacent to the viaduct construction site and so subject to intolerable noise and dust. Your petitioners' rural views of trees, wildlife and surrounding lakes will be destroyed and replaced with machinery and concrete.

Once the viaduct is complete, your petitioners' once rural view, will then be replaced with a huge concrete structure immediately adjacent to them. Screening of this structure with trees would be difficult due to the size and location. The viaduct may also obscure the afternoon and evening sun, particularly in the winter, casting a dark shadow over the marina and the towpath.

Some of your petitioners may have to be relocated as they are moored in part of the marina that may be compulsory acquired, this could be difficult as moorings are scarce. When completed it is estimated that there will be 36 trains every hour travelling up to speeds of 320km per hour immediately adjacent to the marina. The promoters have not

indicated the decibel level of the trains in this circumstance. The ES accompanying the Bill suggests 90 Db. at 25 metres.

Your petitioners are concerned about the noise pollution that will surround them which will be heightened due to the trains travelling over large areas of water. Your petitioners believe that the promoters of the Bill have not properly considered this factor when estimating noise impacts.

12. Your petitioner is concerned that construction will cause severe disruption for the wildlife on the many lakes that the viaduct will be built across. The lakes in the Harefield area, including the marina have a wide range of bird life. These include Great Crested Grebes, Little Grebes, Tufted Ducks, Pochards, Shoveller Ducks, Herons, Cormorants, Egyptian Geese, Moorhens, Coots, Water Rails and many more. The trees and land around the lakes also support a wide range of wildlife. Parts of the lakes may be filled in and many trees and plants lost, resulting in loss of habitat and will be detrimental to local ecosystems overall.

13. Your petitioners request that serious consideration is given to the option of extending the tunnel under the Colne Valley instead of the proposed viaduct. A tunnel would remove the impact on your petitioners, of noise and dust during construction and noise from the completed railway, as well as being sympathetic to the surrounding environment and prevent closure of public rights of way.

If your Honourable House decides a tunnel is not an option your petitioners request that the viaduct must be designed and constructed sympathetically and maintained visually to a very high standard i.e. by regularly funding removal of graffiti.

The speed of the trains travelling across the viaduct should be reduced to a speed that does not generate a dangerous decibel. The frequency of the trains should also be reduced.

Public Rights of way

14. The construction sites and completed railway will be visible from most of the local rights of way that your petitioners use regularly. Construction work in the Colne Valley area is likely to start earlier than 2017 and will experience the loss and destruction of beautiful natural habitat.

Your petitioners regularly use the towpath and the Denham Quarry track alongside the Grand Union Canal at the location of the proposed viaduct, both of which will be restricted at some point during construction. Temporary closure of both paths at the same time would restrict access to Denham. Your petitioner's use these rights of way for leisure, as a more scenic route to visit family or access services and for commuting by bicycle or on foot.

The viaduct will pass directly overhead at a height of 15 metres carrying up to 36 trains per hour. Your petitioners believe the noise level of passing overhead trains could be damaging to health and quality of life as well as having environmental implications, thereby deterring access to the Grand Union Canal towpath as a valued and popular

recreational amenity.

15. Your petitioners are concerned about the proposal to construct a permanent National Grid Feeder Station and access road on Greenbelt land alongside Harvil Road. Your petitioner is concerned about the design and height of the National Grid Feeder Station which will be clearly visible from footpaths used by your petitioners, and that it will be unsympathetic towards the surrounding environment. This will have a significant negative impact on the landscape, which currently comprises open fields.

16. Some of your petitioners often use Old Shire Lane, which currently has a fantastic view over a huge green field and towards Harefield. This view will be filled with a massive construction site housing workers and construction of the railway itself.

17. Your petitioners request that the National Grid Feeder Station be screened, with trees planted around it to minimise the adverse visual impact and in keeping with the local surroundings.

Your petitioners request that the tunnel be extended under the area, removing the need for many construction sites. If this is not possible then screening of the railway, using embankments and trees should be installed ahead of construction.

Your petitioner requests that public rights of way are not closed for long periods and that the towpath and Denham Quarry path are not closed at the same time. Any permanent diversion of public rights of way should be of similar length, not parallel to the HS2 track and planned in consultation with local communities.

Construction Traffic

18. Your petitioner's homes are situated by Moorhall Road. Moorhall Road and Harvil Road are the only roads that give your petitioners' access in and out of Harefield. Harvil Road may be closed for seven years and traffic redirected down New Years Green Lane. New Years Green Lane, which is narrow, heavily potholed and winding, is not suitable for the amount of traffic that would be generated, especially if HGV's were to be using the road. Your petitioners are concerned about the adverse impact construction traffic will have on the accessibility to everyday and essential services. Your petitioners use Harvil Road to commute by car, bus or bicycle for work, visiting family and accessing other essential networks including childcare as well as to provide care for relatives.

Two construction sites are proposed along Moorhall Road and the construction of the proposed viaduct across this road. Your petitioners use Moorhall / Moorfield Road by car on a regular basis to access the M25, M40 and other local routes such as the A412. Moorhall Road is used on a daily basis (on foot and by public transport) to access local shops and services such as childcare, commuting and for leisure purposes to access the Grand Union Canal towpath. Your petitioners are concerned that access in and out of their homes will be severely and adversely impacted by the volume of HGVs due to the presence of the construction sites and could potentially result in a rise in road traffic

accidents. Construction traffic will result in considerable delays and cost affecting your petitioner's daily commute to work, schools and access to essential services. Construction traffic and road closures could also cause serious delays to the emergency services when travelling to Harefield and the surrounding area and therefore possibly cause loss of life.

19. Your petitioners are also concerned for the condition of the above Roads, particularly Moorhall Road which appears to be constantly subsiding, presumably because it is part of a flood plain. There are also many potholes in this area. Heavy use by HGV's is likely to make these problems inherently worse and the already subsiding section of Moorhall Road may not tolerate this extra volume and weight to which it will be constantly subjected. Your petitioners fear that this will cause more road closures, traffic accidents and pothole damage to cars.

20. Your petitioners regularly use the U9 and 331 London Bus services. Part of the U9 route is along Harvil Road and the 331 along Moorhall Road. The U9 route is the only direct service to Ickenham, which some of your petitioners use to visit family. If this service were to be cancelled your petitioners would have to use two buses, therefore doubling travel costs. It would be very difficult and slow for a bus to travel down New Years Green Lane as an alternative, especially with extra HGV usage. The U9 also accesses residential areas in west Harefield and is the only public transport connection to the world-renowned Harefield Heart Hospital, part of the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust. The U9 and 331 London bus service are the only routes that provide onward access to rail services, essential for the employment of some of your petitioners. Your petitioners are concerned that this facility will be withdrawn or disrupted for a number of years due to the delays that will be caused by construction traffic. There are no other alternative routes for these services in South Harefield.

21. Your petitioners submit that if a tunnel were constructed in this area, the construction sites would not be necessary and therefore construction traffic will be reduced, alleviating the above concerns and the related knock on affects to surrounding areas.

If your Honourable House decide against a tunnel, your petitioner's submit that only one of the roads be used for construction traffic at any one time and outside of peak hours and that this will monitored for compliance. During construction, the nominated undertaker must maintain the quality of the roads and repair any damage by HGV's. A hotline should be set up to allow road users to report any road damage and the highway authority notified of all reports so that repairs are made as soon as possible. Your petitioner's request that Harvil Road and Moorhall/ Moorfield Road are not closed for any longer than necessary.

Air pollution

22. Your petitioners enjoy a healthy active outdoor lifestyle, walking, running and boating, using the Grand Union Canal, marina, surrounding open green space, public rights of way and woodland. Your petitioners are concerned that the air pollution generated during the construction period of at least seven years, further aggravated by the disproportionate and large amount of construction proposed for such a small area, will increase the petitioners' risk of ill health and also many other residents in Harefield.

23. Your petitioners request that your Honourable House consider a tunnel instead of a viaduct to reduce the amount of air pollution caused by construction.

Loss of Community

24. The boating community in Harefield Marina and this area of the Grand Union Canal is very strong and your petitioner is concerned that this community will be damaged by the displacement this project will cause.

Many people choose to moor their boats in Harefield marina or use the temporary moorings along the towpath because of the rural location.

Many boats in the marina are only used for cruising outside of the marina for a short period of the year or for mainly short trips, some are rarely used for cruising. These people, including some of your petitioners, use their boats, especially at weekends or sunny periods, as a rural second home or just somewhere to go and relax for the day. The towpath moorings are also used for a similar purpose by passing boaters, or boaters with less rural moorings nearby. Most of these people will not want to spend time next to a building site and later on alongside a huge viaduct carrying 36 deafening high speed trains an hour. Many people who live or spend most of their time on their boats, in the marina or on the opposite towpath will also not want to remain here. Many of these people are likely to sell their boats or move them elsewhere. Moorings are scarce in this area, especially of a rural nature, so relocation could prove impossible. The marina and towpath could end up being mainly for the storage of boats, with no community.

25. Your petitioners request that the tunnel be extended under the Colne Valley to avoid the destruction of their community and way of life.

If this is not possible then your petitioner requests that the current plans for the project are altered to reduce some of the impact by locating the viaduct further South, as far as is possible.

If the current plans go ahead, then alternative mooring sites should be provided and for no more cost than the remaining part of the marina.

Loss of Business

26. One of your petitioners works mainly in the marina painting boats, which may be impossible at times, if there are large amounts of dust in the air. The loss of community could also result in less customers for your petitioner.

This petitioner also lives in the marina and alongside the towpath opposite for most of

the year, so their whole way of life will be disrupted and spoiled. This petitioner has spent a large part of the last 12 years at this location. Being self-employed, relocation could be difficult, as restarting in a new area can be very slow.

Some of your petitioners work from home on their boats, noise from the surrounding construction sites could make this difficult.

27. Your petitioners again request a tunnel.

Sustainable Placement

28. Your petitioners are located close to Park Lodge Farm on Harvil Road and are regular users of Harvil Road and footpaths in the surrounding countryside and woodland. This land has been safe guarded for the sustainable placement of spoil from tunnelling. Your petitioners are concerned because the safeguarded area is as large as the area of Harefield. Your petitioners are concerned about the visual impact of the dumping of spoil, as the landscape will be transformed, changing the character of the area.

Your petitioners are concerned that the dumping of spoil will obliterate the landscape and wildlife, trees and plants will be destroyed. The spoil, if from tunnelling may not be of a suitable type for many plants to recover and could be contaminated with toxins.

29. Your petitioners are concerned that the volume of HGV traffic will be further more increased when the disproportionate amount of spoil is transported to Harefield, causing further traffic congestion and more air and noise pollution. The height they propose to dump the spoil, at 3 meters is a cause for concerns regarding the increased risk of flooding in the location of the petitioners' properties, an area that is already considered a flood plain.

30. Your petitioners request that the promoters reconsider and give more thought to their decision as to where to dump the spoil. The spoil could be transported by rail and placed in an area where it would cause no adverse effect. Numerous sites have been suggested, but HS2 Ltd have failed to acknowledge these. This would also alleviate the heightened traffic, noise and dust pollution.

Flooding

31. In early 2014 your petitioners witnessed flooding in Moorhall Road. One proposed construction site will be on land that serves as flood water storage for Moorhall Road when the River Colne and surrounding lakes flood. Your petitioners are concerned that there will be a further risk of flooding with the loss of this flood water storage area. Your petitioners are concerned that flooding will cause further traffic congestion. Moorhall Road was closed for approximately one week due to the flooding. If this were

to happen again and Harvil Road happened to be shut for construction, the only way out of South Harefield would be via Harefield village as New Years Green Lane floods regularly.

32. Flood water could also cause long delays to construction as the Colne Valley can be severely affected, increasing the cost of the project and the amount of time that your petitioners would be affected by the construction. The promoters should also consider the risk that expensive machinery could be damaged or cut off by flood water, therefore increasing cost.

33. Your petitioners suggest that a tunnel instead of the proposed viaduct would take away these risks. If your Honourable House decides a tunnel is not an option, the promoters of the Bill should consider these risks and make a more informed decision with regards to how many construction sites should be sited in a relatively small area within a high risk flood area. The promoters should also consider the design of these construction sites so as to not interrupt any natural drainage.

Settlement

34. Your petitioners are concerned about settlement effects or other damage to the banks and bed of the canal and Harefield marina, due to construction of the viaduct. An accidental breach of the canal and marina would be difficult to stop quickly, as there are no nearby narrow points, i.e. bridges where stop planks could be positioned. Therefore large temporary dams would need to be built, which take time. The pound between Denham lock and Widewater lock is approximately one and a half miles in length. Accidental lowering of this pound by any more than 30cm, would result in damage to boats, particularly in the marina where the depth varies by several metres. Your petitioners are concerned that their boats could be sunk or damaged by underwater obstacles if there was a breach.

35. Your petitioners would like to see an effective and agreed monitoring system in place prior to construction, to measure the exact effect of any settlement alongside the canal and the marina. This must include an agreed threshold, with the Canal and River Trust and the leaseholders of the marina, for ground movement within the vicinity. If the threshold is exceeded, construction must stop until remedial measures are put in place to minimise settlement.

Crime and Policing

36. Your petitioners are concerned the construction of the viaduct from the start will result in the rise of crime in the Harefield area. Your petitioners are concerned about the impact of the proposed residential construction site based on the A412, which will house at least 200 workers, along with six other non-residential construction sites proposed for

the local area. The non-residential sites housing expensive machinery will be vulnerable targets for theft. These construction sites and the route of the proposed railway, may also attract many protesters, increasing the need for policing.

37. Harefield Village has one designated Police officer and one Police Community Support Officer. These officers are based at Ruislip, approximately four miles away. Your petitioners are concerned the long delays caused by road closures and construction traffic on roads leading to Harefield from Ruislip and Uxbridge and a rise in crime will result in totally inadequate policing in the area. Your petitioner is concerned that HS2 limited has failed to recognise or chosen to ignore the issue of policing.

38. Your petitioners submit that the construction of a tunnel in place of the viaduct would avoid increasing the risk crime in Harefield and the Colne Valley area. Damage to the country side will be minimised, therefore attracting less media attention and less threat from protestors. Your petitioners request that your Honourable House consider that tunneling would be the cheaper and less disruptive option to the benefit of all involved or affected.

If your Honourable House decides this cannot be an option Harefield Village must be provided with sufficient policing. Your petitioners request that thought be given to HS2 limited funding the provision of extra officers and a local base.

Acquisition of landscape

39. Your petitioners are concerned about the powers to acquire land and rights in land compulsory set out in clauses 4 of the bill, and believe that the powers sought go beyond what is required to achieve implementation of HS2. The powers under clause 47 to acquire land for regeneration and other purposes are unprecedented, unnecessary and only serve to create additional blight.

Your petitioners are concerned that HS2 Ltd may acquire part of Harefield marina, with no legal limits, severely blighting their way of life.

40. Your petitioners seek an assurance that the Secretary of State will acquire no greater amount of land than is reasonably required for the construction and operation of the works authorised by the Bill. Your petitioners request that the bill and the deposited plans be amended to exclude land that is not required, or that the Secretary of State be required to enter into legally binding agreements with landowners saying that land that is not required will not be compulsory acquired. Your petitioners respectfully request that clause 47 be removed from the Bill.

Initial comments regarding lack of information

41. Your petitioners wish to express concern that the interests of the local boating community have been ignored by HS2. Most boat owners in Harefield Marina do not know how close HS2 will be or that the latest plans for the project actually include part of the marina, meaning loss of moorings. Your petitioners believe that even the marina landowners themselves and the leaseholders were only told recently.

The ongoing lack of information has made it impossible to understand the potential impacts of HS2 on your petitioners lives and work.

42. 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.

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