

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Against – on Merits – [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 CHILTERN LIBERAL DEMOCRATS (Covering Chesham and Amersham Parliamentary Division)

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, 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 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 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 Chiltern Liberal Democrats has a membership throughout the Chiltern District. Many of the residents in the association will thus be directly and specially affected during construction and fitting out phases of HS2, particularly those resident in the parishes of the Misbourne Valley – Chalfont St Peter, Chalfont St Giles, Amersham, Little Missenden and Great Missenden
- 8 Your Petitioner is particularly concerned about the following aspects of the Bill.

The affect that this project will have on the AONB

Many of our members enjoy walks and recreation in the area. Their enjoyment of the area will be greatly diminished if the HS2 Scheme is allowed to proceed which would lower our members quality of life.

Your petitioner notes that the Chilterns AONB is the only AONB on the HS2 line as proposed between London / Birmingham / Manchester /Leeds. It is designated under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) and is further protected under the National Planning Policy Framework and the European Landscape Convention. The Chilterns AONB is therefore worthy and deserving of protection by a fully-bored tunnel.

Footpaths and Rights of Way

During construction many footpaths, bridle ways and other rights of way will be diverted. Some will permanently disappear from the map. This will severely reduce the attractiveness of the AONB to walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders. The area will be less inviting to people from further away thus reducing the tourist trade using local businesses.

Highways, road closures and diversions

Traffic associated with the construction of the HS2 line will severely impact on the area between Denham and Wendover, which is already heavily used in the day to day lives of residents in the area.

Construction traffic should be controlled to avoid Conservation areas and village centres by implementation of legal orders. All the strategic routes in the area are heavily used by commuter traffic and measures should be taken to avoid movement of construction vehicles during morning and evening 'rush hours'.

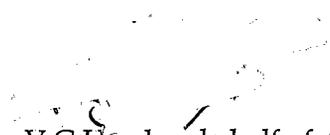
During construction there will be severe disruption with the closure of some roads which will have a major adverse effect on vehicle movements. The changes in traffic flows will lead to increased delays on already heavily used routes as vehicles are diverted. Emergency services are already hampered by the volume of traffic at peak times.

- 9 Your petitioner fully supports the submissions made by Chiltern District Council, The Chiltern Conservations Board and other local Town and Parish Councils in their request to extend a fully-bored tunnel to the western end (Wendover) of the AONB as this would remove most, if not all, construction traffic and many of the negative impacts on those residents living along the currently proposed construction routes. In addition to the AONB, this would also preserve three ancient woodlands.
- 10 For the foregoing and connected reasons your petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended to include extended tunnelling as proposed, then the Bill should not be allowed to pass into law.

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.

Signature of Petitioner


V G Head on behalf of Chiltern Liberal Democrats

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Against the Bill – on merits –

Contact details:

[Redacted contact details]