

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 Hillingdon Rowing 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 **Hillingdon Rowing Club (HRC)**

- 7.1 HRC is the only open rowing club in north west London/south west Hertfordshire/south east Buckinghamshire, and so is the only club available to anyone in the region who wishes to take part in the sport.
- 7.2 The club is a direct result of the Olympic Legacy, having started in 2012 by the surge of interest in the sport created by the success of the GB rowers in the London Olympics.
- 7.3 Over 250 people have learnt to row with the club or on learn to row courses run by the Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre (HOAC).
- 7.4 The club has 80 members, 30 of whom are under 18. The vast majority of these members are completely new to the sport.
- 7.5 The club is very active, with 2 rowing sessions a week in winter and 4 in summer, in addition to 2 fitness training sessions. The club competed at 15 regattas in the 2013 season.
- 7.6 The club continues to be contacted by people wishing to take up the sport.
- 7.7 It is clear there is an appetite for the sport in the region.
- 7.8 The club has built up a fleet of 8 four man boats, 3 doubles and 5 singles. On two occasions this year demand has been so great that every single boat has been in use on the water, meaning there were 49 members taking part in the sport simultaneously. In addition the club has a new double and 2 new singles currently on order.

Summary

HRC is a very successful result of the 2012 London Olympic legacy and has attracted a large and active membership.

- 7.9 The club has so far received £16,000 in grant aid and is currently applying for another £4,000. In addition, a joint application with HOAC and Brunel Students for up to £40,000 is in the initial planning stages.
- 7.10 The club is also fully intending to work with the London Borough of Hillingdon in a drive to increase activity amongst the population and decrease obesity.
- 7.11 The club is now a fully established part of the region’s sporting scene.
- 7.12 Since 2013 the club has been joined at HOAC by Brunel University Rowing Club, which is also a very active club.

Summary

HRC and rowing are already becoming part of the established sports scene in the region.

7.13 The progress to date shows very clearly that there is a significant demand for the sport of rowing in the region

7.14 If the future of the sport can be guaranteed, there is a potential for more participation in addition to the growth of the club, with schools and further education establishments actively taking part.

7.15 As the region covered by the club includes two counties, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, in addition to Hillingdon, there is potential for more clubs to be established and develop, thus increasing the potential for a higher standard of competitive rowing.

7.16 British Rowing fully supports the club, HOAC and Brunel University Rowing Club in their efforts to grow the sport in the region, and this is included in British Rowing's Watersports Programme in the 2013 - 2017 plan.

Summary

There is huge potential for the sport of rowing to grow in the region

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

9 Your Petitioners objections to the bill are as follows:

9.1 The club rows at the HOAC site in Harefield, Middlesex. This is in the path of the HS2 railway Colne Valley viaduct. Construction of this will commence in 2016 and will last for 5 - 7 years. During this time rowing will not be able to take place on the site and it is not clear if the site will be suitable for the sport after the construction works have been completed.

9.2 HS2 has refused to engage with the club on the basis that it is not the freeholder or leaseholder of the HOAC site. Therefore there has been absolutely no consultation as to whether the proposed construction works or finished viaduct will be done in such a way as to enable rowing to take place during the construction phase or after its completion. Construction seems to require the building of semi-permanent pontoons across the lake to facilitate erecting the viaduct. HS2 also plans to deposit tunnel spoil into the lake to make reed beds for birds, significantly reducing the lake's size and so render it useless for rowing, which needs a course of at least 650 metres. The car park at HOAC will become a construction site.

9.3 This will not only result in rowing not being available in the region for

this period, it will also result in the demise of the club as it will not be able to survive such a lengthy close down, and in any case the HOAC site may not be suitable for the sport after the construction has been completed.

- 9.4 This will result in the extinguishing of a vibrant, popular manifestation of the Olympic legacy from the 2012 London Olympics and the extensive potential for the sport in the north west London/south west Hertfordshire/south east Buckinghamshire region will not be realised.

Summary

If HS2 is built as planned, Hillingdon Rowing Club will close which will make the sport of rowing, currently being established as part of the 2012 London Games Olympic legacy, unavailable to all residents in the region, including the young.

- 9.5 Your petitioners require that the nominated undertakers alter the route of the railway to avoid the HOAC site or carry out an in depth viability study for a tunnel under the entire Colne Valley.
- 9.6 Should a tunnel not be feasible, your petitioner requires that Hillingdon Rowing Club is relocated to another lake in the Colne Valley Park.
- 9.7 The only suitable site is Broadwater Lake, a mile to the north of the HOAC site. All other lakes do not offer a rowing course of adequate length or are not accessible or do not have land space for secure boat and equipment storage, or to allow for future expansion which the club as the sport gains popularity and increased participation in the future as the Olympic legacy is realised.

Summary

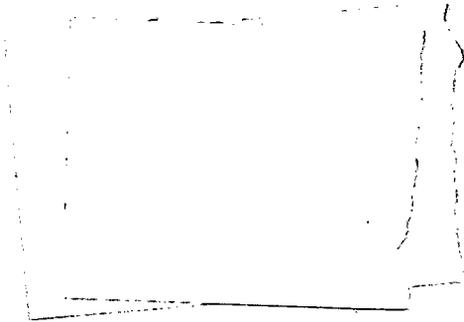
If the railway is to be constructed through the HOAC site as currently envisaged, HRC must be relocated to Broadwater Lake.

- 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.

Signed



Jonathan Philip Neale Chairman, Hillingdon Rowing Club

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BILL

Petition of Hillingdon Rowing Club

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

Jonathan Neale

