

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Against – on Merits.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled.

THE HUMBLE PETITION of Campaign for Better Transport.

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.
- 3 Clauses 19 to 36 of the Bill, together with Schedules 16 to 26, make provision for the grant of planning permission and other consents and for the disapplication or modification of various controls.
- 4 Clauses 43 to 65 of the Bill, together with Schedules 29 to 31, contain general and miscellaneous provisions. These include provision for the designation of nominated undertakers, the making of transfer schemes, provision for statutory undertakers, provision for the compulsory acquisition of land for regeneration and for relocation purposes, and powers for the reinstatement of land. Provision is also included to apply powers of the Bill to further high speed works, to confer a power of entry for further high speed works, as to the application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and as respects the application of arbitration.
- 5 Campaign for Better Transport’s interests are injured primarily by the omission from the bill of measures, the absence of which will cause the HS2 project to harm the realisation of our charitable objectives.
- 6 Your Petitioners are Campaign for Better Transport. Campaign for Better Transport is a charity, the objects of which include the promotion for the public benefit of the use of sustainable modes of transport and patterns of

living and transport which reduce the adverse effects of transport upon the environment, health, society and natural and historical landscapes within the United Kingdom.

- 7 Your Petitioners and their interests are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
- 8 The linkages between HS2 and the rest of the rail and transport networks are at present undeveloped, so it does not form part of an easy to use, door to door network of travel and its impacts across the country, especially to places not served directly by it, are unclear.
- 9 As future links to Scotland and Wales are not clear and, if HS2 and HS1 are not linked by a purpose-built and high quality connection, HS2 will be unable to offer links from the wider UK to the rest of Europe and hence alternatives to short-distance aviation. As delivering modal shift from aviation is a priority environmental aim for HS2, the bill must make provision for a portal at Old Oak Common which will allow future construction of a link connecting HS2 to HS1 services to mainland Europe.
- 10 The bill does not provide sufficient provision on enforcing the appropriate use of the capacity on the existing lines released by HS2, and the potential benefits that this capacity can bring in terms of enabling lower carbon development based around the current rail network. Research commissioned by your Petitioners (Greengauge 21 (2012) The carbon impacts of High Speed 2. <http://www.greengauge21.net/publications/the-carbon-impacts-of-hs2/>) showed that HS2 carbon savings could be increased by 8% by fully using spare West Coast Main Line capacity for enhanced commuter or inter-regional passenger services. Even more benefits could be delivered with policies that ensure greater occupancy of these medium-distance trains. This highlights the value in ensuring that future rail franchises are set up so that they are able to unlock the spin-off benefits of HS2. However, the carbon savings from using the additional unclaimed capacity of three train paths per hour in each direction for freight are considerably larger still, adding 55% to the direct carbon savings from HS2. This is such a strong advantage that it would be worthwhile examining complementary measures to ensure that a major switch from Heavy Goods Vehicle road haulage to rail freight is achieved as a consequence of HS2. Complementary measures could include extension of lorry road user charging to a full distance-based charging scheme.
- 11 The bill as written contains no provision for policy on fares for use of the proposed rail services. If these fares are set with a "premium" on the already high walk-on fares on the rest of the railways, as happened on HS1 domestic services, many people will be excluded from using HS2 services and it will become a railway for the rich, which does not promote modal shift enabling sufficient numbers of the population to switch from cars and other transport

to HS2.

- 12 Too many of the proposed HS2 stations are at out of town locations with only vague plans for connections to other public transport. This will likely result in encouragement of car use and potentially car-based development. City centre stations are estimated to be around 7% more efficient in carbon terms than parkway stations, even when only considering the direct impacts of high speed rail travel. To this extent, it is disappointing to see the plans for Birmingham Interchange, which we are concerned will end up as a parkway station in the Green Belt. At the minimum, high quality public transport links will be needed to this station, yet so far only vague plans have been made or even discussed for these. In their absence, the Interchange will generate significant carbon emissions and will also add to congestion on the nearby M6 and M42 motorways. As such, the Bill must be amended to account for the creation of travel plans for each station, with stations designed around high modal shares for sustainable access travel modes. Campaign for Better Transport recommends that the Department for Communities and Local Government be tasked with developing planning policy in support of this, and to promote high density development served by new/ upgraded local public transport feeding into the rail stations will reduce car use and car dependency and hence carbon emissions, as per the approach adopted on the East-West rail line, where new development is being sited around the current and reopened stations such as Bicester and Winslow.
- 13 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, clauses [...], so far affecting your Petitioners, should not be allowed to pass into law.
- 14 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 interests 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.

James MacColl, officer of Campaign for Better Transport

BACKSHEET:

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PETITION OF CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER TRANSPORT

Against the Bill – On Merits – By Counsel &c

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