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IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

PETITION OF JOHN GREEN
AGAINST THE BILL - On Merits - By Counsel &c.

4 Jeffrey's Street
London
NW1 9PR

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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 JOHN GREEN

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 Staffordhsire , 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 Ian Duncan Smith, Secretary Eric Pickles, Secretary Owen Peterson, 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 are specified in clauses 1 and 2 of and Schedules 1 and 2 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 and schedule 2 and 3 to the Bill.

7. Your Petitioner is John Green who owns Flat 1, 7 Mornington Terrace NW1 7RR with his wife. The property is in an area immediately affected by the proposed development and construction of a high speed rail network, known as HS2, with all the associated road transport of materials to and spoil from the proposed tunnelling, demolition and construction work of the new railway line.
8. Your Petitioner and his interest are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
9. The HS2 Scheme has set a safeguarding zone of 60m in urban areas and 120m in rural areas. Your Petitioner's property, which is in an urban area, directly faces the proposed route of the new high speed railway tracks, see map HS2-HS2-PL-MAP-000-000002-P03. It is outside the 60m safeguarding zone, but within the 120m safeguarding zone which would apply had it been located in a rural area. Since it is outside the 60m safeguarding zone, your Petitioner's property will suffer from property blight leading up to and during the works without any compensation from the Government being forthcoming.
10. Directly opposite your Petitioner's property there will be four high speed tracks see map C220-ARP-CV-DPP-01A-580104 instead of the usual two for the majority of the line. The safeguarding zone has not been enlarged accordingly to take into account the increased work that will be taking place in this area of the route. It is colossally unjust that there should be different safeguarding zones for the rural and for urban areas. It is clear to the Petitioner and it should be equally clear to the honourable members of the Select Committee that this has been done for purely economic reasons designed to compensate the fewest number of people as possible. It's clearly far cheaper to have a safeguarding zone at 120m where property is scarce in the rural areas than to be equable and apply it to the urban areas where the number of properties affected will be far greater, and the compensation outlay for HS2 considerably higher. If you prick us, do we not bleed? There should be no discrimination between the rural and urban areas.
11. Your Petitioner is not an owner-occupier of Flat 1, 7 Mornington Terrace, London NW1 7RR and for this reason also would not be eligible for any of the compensation schemes proposed by HS2. The property provides a rental income which supplements the Petitioner's State Pension. The Government is encouraging the population to build its own pension provision – this your Petitioner has done through this property. The Government is now blighting this non-owner occupied property and many others like it along the route without offering any form of compensation whatsoever. Few renters will wish to live next to what the Government proclaims will be the largest construction project in Europe. Your Petitioner and his wife have no intention of selling but we do require the Government to provide adequate compensation for a loss of pension income which is due to no fault of their own, but wholly of the Government's making.
12. Your Petitioner would like the Select Committee to require the Bill to be amended as follows to overcome his major concerns with the scheme:

The Select Committee is asked to amend the Bill, firstly by removing the inequality of the safeguarding zone between the urban and rural areas by having one safeguarding distance of 120m along the whole length of the proposed high speed line, secondly to include non owner-occupied domestic properties to be included in all the compensation schemes.

13. 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 prays your Honourable house that the Bill may not be allowed to pass into law as it now stands and that he 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 Petitioner and in support of such other clauses and provisions as may be necessary or expedient for his 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.

Signed:

