

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013–14

High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill

Against the Bill – 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 THE WELLS HOUSE ROAD RESIDENT

SHEWETH as follows:-

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”.

- 1 The Bill is presented by Mr Secretary McLoughlin.
- 2 Objections are being presented around numerous issues arising from the scheduled works in the Old Oak Common area in the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hammersmith and Fulham, the lack of mitigation of effects and the lack of compensation for communities impacted by the construction and operation of HS2.
- 3 Your Petitioners are an association of residents, established in 2011, who represent the interests of Wells House Road residents, landlords and a care home directly affected by the HS2 Old Oak Common interchange construction and operation, and the works described in the HS2 Environmental Statement. Their rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill.
- 4 Wells House Road is a triangular cul de sac of around 125 homes of which 45 are occupied by people who have lived in the street for 25-70 years. At least ten homes are occupied by the children of the original residents and many are caring for elderly parents in these homes. It is a culturally diverse and integrated street, that includes both white British and first generation immigrants from the Caribbean, many of whom have grown up and played in the street together. In

short, this is a traditional family community that has a strong desire to retain its integrity as such. It should also be noted that many people chose to move to Wells House Road as it is an oasis of peace and quiet, close to West London areas such as Notting Hill, Shepherds Bush and Kensal Rise and will excellent transport connections. I agree with all whr association petition and I have my personal demand which is , I cannot tolerate the magnitude of the noise , therefore I need HS2 to either buy my property or relocate me while the work is ongoing.

- 5 Wells House Road is located off Old Oak Common Lane. Construction of the Old Oak Common site is proposed up to the property borders on all three sides of the street for up to ten years. The tunnel will run 12m from the top of the tunnel beneath homes on the northern tip of the street and the track will emerge from the mouth of the tunnel 70 metres from homes; the Old Oak Common station and the corresponding construction site will be on the eastern side of Wells House Road; the main haul road will run against the property borders on the southern side of Wells House Road; the Victoria Road Crossover box (240m long x 31m wide) and main compound will be border the western side of Wells House Road; homes on the eastern and south-eastern corner have also been subject to compulsory purchase orders of their gardens while the retaining wall is rebuilt for approximately one year; and Old Oak Common Lane will be closed for approximately one year with no road or pedestrian access to vital amenities (schools, shops, transport, hospitals, doctors, churches) whilst the road is lowered and widened and the bridges are rebuilt.
- 6 In short, Wells House Road will be in the centre of the proposed major HS2 Construction site for a 10 year period, with much of the work planned for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I live at number 45 Wells House Road with my wife and three children, two of my children study at Chiswick School and my third child studies at berry Mede primary school. We have lived in this road for over 21 years.

Wells House Road has exceptional needs

- 1 Your petitioners believe that at Wells House Road, given the community impacts are widespread over such a considerable period of time and extremely high in terms of adversity, the residents in this area should be classified as 'sensitive receptors' and therefore treated as a special case that merits further review and mitigation proposals to better deal with the acknowledged significant impacts.
- 2 It is generally recognised that Wells House Road will likely suffer the more adverse impact of any other community along the line.
- 3 Whilst HS2 Ltd has held a series of community forums and met with the

residents of Wells House Road, despite from day one in the process verbally recognising Wells House Road as a 'special case' with significant impact from the proposed development, they have not as yet resolved any of the needs of residents regarding mitigation of impact measures and property compensation laid down in our 50-page response to the HS2 Environmental Statement consultation. Indeed, the Environmental Statement, recognises: *"This CFA report presents the likely significant effects of the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme on the environment within the area of Kilburn (Brent) to Old Oak Common (CFA4)."* However, little if any mitigation is presented.

- 4 In addition, HS2 Ltd has described the 'loss of amenity as 'significant' in terms of noise, visual effects, construction traffic, lost of access to amenities, air pollution and overall isolation. However, the community impact ratings are stated from 'negligible to moderate' despite the scale and duration of impact on residents. (See Environmental Statement, Volume 5, Technical Appendices CFA4/Kilburn to Old Oak Common point 2.8). It can be assumed that this rating has led to the rejection of being recognised as a 'special case' and thus compromised our eligibility for adequate property compensation and impact mitigation measures.

Property compensation and compensation

- 5 Currently, the only compensation available to Wells House Road residents is via the 'Need to sell' scheme. Under the Need to Sell scheme, as expressed in HS2 Limited's 'Your guide to our new property proposals' "owner-occupiers would be able to ask the government to purchase their home for its full un-blighted market value. An independent panel will consider each application on a case-by-case basis and make a recommendation as to whether the property should be purchased". It goes on to specify that applicants could be asked to submit evidence against five complex criteria.
- 6 I believe that this is not adequate for Wells House Road's special needs and that there is a requirement for a compensation scheme that fits with the special needs of Wells House Road residents. We are effectively locked into our homes for the ten year duration of the construction and during that time there are likely to be many reasons that people may need or wish to move: they may not be able to put up with the disruption, they may suffer ill-health or any of the other reasons in the fifth point, they may die and pass their property to family members, or they may simply wish to move to a new home, etc. We believe that the Need to Sell scheme is a complex system that requires an application process with potential hurdles and that a scheme should be put in place with no restrictions on the reason to sell.

- 7 It should be noted that a large proportion of our residents are low income, have no access to the internet, have literacy issues or English is not their first language, have physical and mental disabilities that add to the complexity of this type of process.
- 8 Further, we are concerned that the option to sell to the government will negatively impact on community cohesion and that those that chose to stay could become isolated in a broken community, surrounded by empty homes or homes rented to undesirable tenants. This would further devalue property prices and our quality of life and is likely to lead to an increase in crime.
- 9 In addition, it will be hard to establish an 'un-blighted' price as the area around Old Oak Common has been devalued for the past decade through the uncertainty of unconfirmed developments in the area. Property owners in Wells House Road would require almost double the current value of their homes to purchase an equivalent size and style of 3-bedroom Edwardian house elsewhere in the area. Note that the highest price reached for a 3-bedroom home in Wells House Road has been £440,000. Against this, a similar sized property in Zone 2 would start at around £700,000 in Acton or Harlesden, with little available under £1 million. On the sale of their home, residents would be looking at trading down to a 1-2 bedroom flat in the area – unsuitable for a family of 4-5 and a downscale in quality of life for all.
- 10 Once construction begins and access to Wells House Road is cut off to East Acton, local estate agents advise that blight will increase and property is likely only to be purchased by long-term investors, seeking a 'bargain'.
- 11 The 'need to sell' scheme excludes certain property owners and residents: people on shared ownership and council tenants, landlords who are generally small-time investors for whom their property is their nest egg, people renting spare rooms, people who have purchased after 11 March 2010 (for many HS2 did not show up in searches until 2013), owners of Hilltop Works for whom the conversion of the old furniture warehouse into high-quality loft apartments has been a major investment, etc.
- 12 It also lends itself to abuse by the government or developers who will be open to purchase the properties for profit at the expense of the residents and community cohesion. Indeed, residents are already being approached by predatory speculators and legal advisors and there are many vulnerable people who require protection.
- 13 Therefore, we believe that it is critical that a scheme is developed that allows residents the choice to stay or leave at any point during the construction process and that those who wish to leave will be offered a similar scheme to

home owners in rural area. Namely we believe that residents in Wells House Road should be offered a Property Bond-style Scheme whereby owners will be offered a the price of a similar property in the area. From our discussions with residents, most are likely to continue to live in their homes throughout the duration of the development and this may only be taken up by a handful of home owners.

- 14 In addition, landlords will require compensation for loss or reductions in rent or to be offered the option to rent their homes to HS2 workers at a reasonable market rate. This should also be applied to people who are renting 'spare rooms' for whom income will be lost.
- 15 It should also be noted that the current limit for compensation is for properties that fall within 60 metres of the track. Currently, the closest property is 70 metres from the track, falling short of the current criteria. In addition, we believe HS2 has the legal right to CPO any property within 500 metres from the track. We would challenge this criteria as unfair and feel that the compensation limit should be extended to distance from construction and construction sites and that HS2's ability to CPO any property it desires within a wider limit without a valid need.
- 16 It should be noted that at the meeting with HS2 Limited on 1st May, 2014, HS2 representatives expressed that the reason for lack of compensation was due to the expectation that the values of the homes would rise considerably on completion of the interchange. However, we would like to point out that many of our residents may not live the duration of the development to benefit from the decade of suffering. Others may not be able to withstand this length and impact of disruption and will be driven from their homes to the benefit of developers and investors. We feel this is a cynical perspective and goes against the culture and mindset of residents who consider their properties as homes above 'investments'.

Impact mitigation compensation

- 17 Currently there are few, if any, provisions in the Environmental Statement for providing any mitigation measures against the impact of the construction.
- 18 Rules for HS2 compensation and mitigation are currently subject to the distance properties are from the track and thus exclude most of the properties in Wells House Road. We believe this concept should be rejected in the special case of Wells House Road and that, in its place, impact is measured by the close proximity to construction compounds, Old Oak Common Station and tunnel, Victoria Road Crossover Box, the construction haul road, Old Oak Common Lane closure and construction, the reconstruction of the retaining

wall on Old Oak Common Lane and the overall isolation of all residents. Thus all homes in the Wells House Road 'island' are considered to suffer 'exceptional impact' and measures to mitigate the effect and compensation are tailored to these specific needs.

19 We believe that HS2 should provide a scheme to pay for the various impact mitigation requirements required. These should include a) sound proofing of homes – triple glazing of doors and windows on all sides of homes, sound proofed structures at the ends of gardens for all homes that will experience increased noise, b) air filters and air conditioning to mitigate against dust and pollutants resulting from the construction vehicles and demolitions – again for all homes affected, c) house and garden exterior cleaning, control of vermin generated by demolitions, etc. I am unable to live in any noisy area, I have made that clear at the whr meeting many times, I have to relocated.

20 We also believe that construction is likely to increase the crime rate and incidence of break-ins in the area caused by the construction, access by workers to gardens on the eastern and southern sides of the street and the period of isolation when Old Oak Common Lane is closed. Robust security may be required with CCTVs, home security devices (including alarms and security grills).

21 We are also concerned about the structural damage to homes from the proposed construction and operation of HS2. Likely effects will result, in particular, from the tunnelling beneath Wells House Road, post-operation trains braking and accelerating in and out of Old Oak Common station, demolitions and drilling, construction vehicles driven at the borders of homes, the reconstruction of the sustaining wall, etc. There is currently no provision to survey homes before construction begins or to make good any damage to house structures and we would like to see HS2 provide a budget for and independent survey of all properties before construction begins and to cover all costs of repairs to structures damaged by construction.

22 There may also be times, such as during the construction of the tunnel ("Construction of tunnels by TBM operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week from dedicated tunnelling site at the Victoria Road crossover box main compound" Point 2.4.9 Vol 2 CFA Report – Kilburn to Old Oak Common/No 4/Overview of the area and description of the Proposed Scheme) where residents cannot live or sleep in their homes. There needs to be a provision to HS2 to provide and pay for temporary accommodation during these periods.

I will not be able to live in this house while the construction work is undergoing. I just cannot tolerate any machinery making noise in the vicinity of my home.

- 23 Residents' health is also likely to be compromised by long-term exposure to airborne pollution resulting from the construction. Many of our residents are elderly or are children and there are many cases of people who suffer from asthma or lung disease. To increase the threat from the effects, the Old Oak Common tunnel will be used for the "removal of excavated materials by conveyor from the Euston tunnel" (2.4.69 Vol 2 CFA Report – Kilburn to Old Oak Common/No 4). HS2 would need to monitor health and to provide free healthcare, such as private health insurance to residents exposed to these pollutants and toxins, as well as help in countering any psychological damage due to sleep deprivation.

Old Oak Common Lane Closure

- 24 HS2 plans to close Old Oak Common Lane for a twelve month period and the construction of a retaining wall below houses on the east side of the street, that requires access to gardens, is expected to take 12 months. Limited details of this can be read in points 2.3.26-27 of Vol 2 CFA Report – Kilburn to Old Oak Common/No 4).
- 25 Overall, there is no justification within the Environmental Statement as to why the road closure is required as part of the scheme and indeed why it is essential to lower the road. From a discussion with HS2 Ltd at Wells House Road on 1st May, 2014, HS2 stated that the need for the lowering of Old Oak Common Lane was not for the purpose of HS2 but in fact for TFL requirements to run double decker buses towards East Acton. We demand a review of these plans and an exploration of options to retain single decker buses on this route or for the lowering of the road to be carried out in stages to allow for a single lane to be left open.
- 26 The impact of this road closure on Wells House Road is significant. East Acton is the closest area for amenities to Wells House Road and is a 5-10 minute walk and well served with the 228 bus that takes residents from outside the road to East Acton to the south and Willesden Junction/Harlesden to the north. Residents are reliant on Old Oak Common Lane to access most, if not all, their local amenities: schools (such as John Perryn), nurseries/child care, Hammersmith Hospital (and others), doctors and dentists, local shops and chemists, places of worship, Wormwood Scrubs (the only local green space for walkers, children and dog owners), major transport (East Acton Central Line and numerous bus routes), etc. are all located in East Acton. Currently it is a 5-10 minute walk or 2-3 minutes via the 228 bus to most of these amenities. For many of the elderly or young children, this walk is achievable and also provides sufficient daily exercise. For others, particular those with disabilities, the 228 provides a lifeline to East Acton. If the road closes, there will be not accessible

transport and residents will be completely isolated with a need to walk 10 minutes to the 226 bus stop to take them to North Acton and travel one stop to East Acton on the central line. A 5-10 minute walk would take around 45 minutes by foot, bus and train and will add considerable cost to travel. This will cause hardships for all residents, most particularly school children, elderly and disabled and people traveling to work. A 3.5km diversion of the 228 service would render it useless to most people and HS2 needs to find a viable option for accessing East Acton by public transport and car.

- 27 Similarly, for those who drive, including the many tradesmen who live in Wells House Road, their journey time would be substantially increased to reach anywhere south of Wells House Road. They would need to drive north on Old Oak Common Lane, west on Victoria Road and come back via Western Avenue. Even without construction, this journey can take over 30 minutes and could potentially add much longer time with congestion and disruption brought on by HS2.
- 28 There are a number of residents with medical issues, including at least two people with monitored heart valves, a young man on kidney dialysis who moved to Wells House Road to be close to Hammersmith hospital and many elderly people who require quick access to Hammersmith hospital for emergencies and regular hospital visits. The detour via Western Avenue or Harlesden could mean the difference of life and death. I suffer from a rheumatoid arthritis
- 29 In addition, this is a major through road used by locals for access to Willesden Junction, Harlesden and Wembley to the north and East Acton and all areas to the south and east of the area. One year of closure would cause major traffic congestion in the area and add significantly to journey times. We believe that people using this route or whose businesses will be negatively impacted through loss of earnings have not been consulted on the road closure.
- 30 HS2 has suggested building a temporary footbridge to access East Acton but we don't believe this goes far enough to meet the needs of residents. The footbridge would still not allow people with disabilities or drivers access to East Acton and would be hard to negotiate for people carrying groceries or with baby carriages. In addition, security would be an issue with people needing to cross a long footbridge in the dark – particularly dangerous for children travelling to and from school in the winter months, for the elderly and vulnerable.
- 31 HS2 needs to provide options for keeping one lane open for local access by car and on foot during the lowering of the road and rebuilding of the bridges. This

would allow the vital 228 bus service to keep functioning during this period and for the current transport options to be maintained.

- 32 If this is not possible, provisions need to be arranged for shuttle buses and taxis to take residents to East Acton, schools, childcare, hospitals, pharmacists, places of worship and to other transport and amenity hubs. They will also need to provide provisions for home deliveries for groceries, medications and other essential purchases.

Construction of retaining walls and construction haul road

- 33 Around 25 homes on the eastern side of Wells House Road and a number of homes of the southern side of the road have received CPOs on their properties. This is for construction workers to access to gardens for the reconstruction of the retaining wall (eastern side) for approximately one year and the construction of the main haul road (southern side).
- 34 HS2 have previously led residents to believe that the CPOs were only issued for occasional access to the gardens and that all construction of the wall on the eastern side of the street would be implemented from the street side. However, in the meeting with HS2 Ltd on 1st May, 2014, residents were notified that 'several yards' of gardens on the eastern side of the street would be secured for the reconstruction of the retaining wall and to store materials for the construction. It should be noted that gardens are approximately 10 metres in length and that construction and storage could go right up to the walls of houses. In addition, HS2 Ltd stated that they are under no obligation to return gardens to their former condition and that, in particular, no foliage would be replaced. There is a need to clarify and rectify the situation and for a compensation package to be provided for the 'rental' of garden space and for the restoration of gardens to their former condition.
- 35 It should also be noted that the current retaining wall is made from railway waste and will not withstand vibrations from construction, construction vehicles or tunnelling. Failure to reinforce the walls could lead to loss of gardens and damage to property structures. Up to this point, HS2 has led us to believe that one of the main purposes of reconstructing the wall was to ensure our gardens and properties were secure and safe from damage by construction. Therefore, whether or not the road is lowered, HS2 should be required to reconstruct or reinforce the wall.
- 36 At the meeting on 1st May, 2014, HS2 announced for the first time that only two-thirds of the wall would be rebuilt during the lowering of the road. This would mean that the remaining wall would be vulnerable to damage from the vibrations and also it would have a negative visual impact on the area.

- 37 Overall, no details have been provided by HS2 as to the structures that will be built or for the schedules or impact of construction on homes on either the southern or eastern sides of street. No compensation has been offered for this access or to make good any damage to properties.
- 38 We need greater clarity around the scope of work and the impact on homes affected. In addition, we need HS2 to commit to compensation for any damage or loss of land, temporary or permanent, due to this work.
- 39 We would suggest that the retaining wall is built to the current height of residents' end of garden fences and is sensitively designed to become a characterful visual feature and to continue to be a natural environment for birds and plants, e.g. a plant wall or brickwork matched to houses covered with climbing plants. This wall should stretch from the bridges on Old Oak Common Lane to the mouth of Wells House Road for consistency.
- 40 The gardens on the eastern side are sun traps throughout the morning and until late afternoon in the summer. We wish to ensure that the new retaining wall and structures built around the Old Oak Common station do not take away our light.
- 41 Currently, Wells House Road is a local landmark as it is an enclave of houses built on a hill with much foliage covering the wall that is a home for nesting birds and adds character. We would like to see plans for the wall, in terms of the visual design and effectiveness in acting as a functional sound barrier against sound and negative visual effects.
- 42 Similarly, there are no detailed plans with the environmental statement for the haul route on southern side of the street. This road will be used to transport material and waste to and from the various compounds and will be used by large vehicles throughout the 5-10 year construction period. This will have not only a visual impact but will also cause noise, vibrations and air pollution and dust. HS2 has not provided details of the level of traffic or operational hours.
- 43 A number of actions will be required to mitigate the effects of the haul route:
- a) the construction of a wall or barrier at the ends of gardens on the southern side of the street that will shield gardens from visual effects, noise and dust. Again, this should not be at the expense of loss of light to gardens and homes,
 - b) We would suggest that the haul route is dug deep so that vehicles travel below the level of gardens,
 - c) restrictions should be placed on operational hours, e.g. vehicles only have access during working hours,
 - d) vehicles are required to be covered to lower the impact from dust and pollutants or the haul road itself is covered and sound-proofed along the length of gardens on

the southern side of Wells House Road, e) construction vehicles to be low on CO2 omissions, f) compensation and/or restoration of gardens to their former state.

Localised traffic and public transport impacts

- 44 Throughout the 10-year construction period, there is likely to be significant disruption of traffic and transport services. There is currently a lack of detail on how this will be managed. For instance, aside from the Old Oak Common Lane changes, other major planned changes are mentioned, such as the widening and improvements to the A4000 Victoria Road. It should be noted that even a minor incident in the area causes a knock-on effect across West London and along the A40 to Oxford. It is not uncommon to see gridlock down to the Earls Court area, up the A40 and around Scrubs Lane and Harlesden for a minor local incident.
- 45 Details of works, including schedules and provisions for maintaining access by car and public transport services need to be clarified. We need to understand the options for public transport if and when we are subjected to diversions and route closures. This includes any disruption to local Over ground and Underground services.
- 46 In particular, any disruption to the 228 service from outside Wells House Road needs to be addressed and alternative provisions must be provided.
- 47 Similarly, with the widening of Old Oak Common Lane, provisions need to be made for pedestrians and cyclists. Again, there is a lack of information with the Environmental Statement.

Air quality and noise

- 48 HS2 construction will cause substantial adverse air quality impacts from demolition, construction and traffic impact that will result in further exceedance of the air quality objectives in regard to both particulate and Nitrogen oxides on concentrations both locally and borough wide.
- 49 Full details are required as to how HS2 plans to mitigate the effects. We have earlier requested the provision of air filters and conditioning units as likely there will be times when it will not be possible to open windows and doors without adverse effects on health. We would like to understand fully the measures that will be taken.
- 50 Waste will be taken from the site via conveyor belts and this is planned for 24/7 use. Again, we feel these should be covered to avoid dust. From

anecdotal evidence of people living along the Crossrail route and in Kings Cross where conveyor belts were used, these conveyor belts cause considerable noise and we would therefore ask for these to be sound-proofed and only operated in working hours.

- 51 There will be significant in-combination effects on approximately 125 properties in Wells House Road and 65 properties on Shaftesbury Gardens, Midland Terrace and Old Oak Common Lane and existing and future residential receptors in Victoria Road and Portal Way, Acton resulting in significant all day and night noise and visual effects over a period of five years.
- 52 The HS2 environmental statement fails to provide mitigation measures around sensitive receptor areas, such as Wells House Road. We require full details as to how the noise, sound and vibration levels will be assessed, monitored and controlled and what mitigation measures will be provided both during construction and after operation. We also question the assessment methodology used for the sound and vibration assessment and require clarification, I have serious health problem and I am very sensitive to noise, therefore I wish to be informed the exact degree of level of noise around number 45 wells house road.
- 53 Much of the work is planned for 24 hours a day seven days a week. The environmental statement specifies that the work on the Victoria Road Crossover box, Old Oak Common tunnel and the conveyor belt will be 24/7 over a five-year period. This is not acceptable for residents, including those that work on night shifts, to withstand this level of impact over a 5-10 year period. HS2 needs to restrict the working hours to reasonable working hours, e.g. 7-6 weekdays. I am unable to have any rest when there is a noise in wells house road, therefore I recommend, you will consider my circumstances and relocate me during the five year period.
- 54 No working hours have been specified for other compounds, the Old Oak Common station, the redevelopment of Old Oak Common Lane and the construction and operation of the haul route. Again, restrictions need to be placed on hours of operation to reasonable weekday times.
- 55 Again, a requirement for mitigation measures, such as sound proofing homes, sound and dust-proofed barriers around construction compounds, etc. are required. For residents that cannot live through the noise, disruption and air pollution, temporary housing will need to be provided.

- 56 Canal freight deserves a fair assessment as it has the scope to greatly alleviate some of the concerns of local people around the air pollution, congestion and noise from the conveyor. It also serves the interests of Londoners as reflected in Mode Shift Benefit (MSB) values proposed by DfT (2009:19). There is potential to decrease emissions, noise, road deaths and congestion caused by HGVs which is already problematic in the area. As a major public funded project, HS2 provides an opportunity to use more sustainable transport options.
- 57 We therefore demand a thorough, open book assessment of canal freight feasibility which can be ratified by bodies such as the Freight Group of the Waterways Commission.

Visual impact, light pollution and loss of open spaces

- 58 Temporary and permanent loss of open spaces such as the western and eastern side of Victoria Gardens. Access to Wormwood Scrubs will also be lost for at least a year during the Old Oak Common Lane work. In addition, there are no provisions in the current plans for the creation of any new green space around the Old Oak Common station.
- 59 HS2 needs to deliver a set of plans for the creation of both temporary and permanent open space for walkers, children's play areas and dog walkers.
- 60 We believe that HS2 is considering relocating wetlands from rural areas blighted by HS2 onto Wormwood Scrubs. We strongly believe that this is inappropriate for the area and would limit the use by local residents.
- 61 There is also a lack of sufficient identified mitigation measures to combat landscape and visual impacts both during and post construction. We need to understand the temporary barriers that will be erected around the compounds and the effect what visual impact these will have on homes in Wells House Road.
- 62 Since these structures will be in place for up to 10 years, we feel that these should be designed sensitively to take into consideration: a) visually acceptable to reflect the current and future personality of the area, b) that are functional in terms of being effective barriers to sound and dust, c) that can block lights from the compounds but not take away natural light from homes and gardens.
- 63 Planting of trees will act as natural sound barriers and capture some of the air pollution. We feel planting of mature/semi mature trees should be in the plans from day one.

- 64 The Environmental Statement also fails to mitigate against light pollution and needs to address the need for lighting at night to be invisible to windows overlooking the compounds. Solutions need to be provided for mitigating against light pollution, e.g. lights being switched off at night and only down-lighting to be used.
- 65 Currently, the designs of the Old Oak Common station have not been shared with residents. We therefore need to understand this in greater detail. Specifically: a) what is the proposed height of the station structure in relation to the height of homes in Wells House Road and what is the visual, sound and vibration impact on residents? We propose that the top of the station falls below the height of garden fences on the eastern side of the street. b) since the track is only 70 metres from properties in Wells House Road, we propose that both the track and station are covered to reduce noise impact on current residents and future homes being built under the London Plan, c) we also need to understand how sound and light from the station will be mitigated, including trains accelerating and slowing down and platform noise.

Alternative access for emergency vehicles and to mitigate traffic volumes

- 66 Concerns have been raised to HS2 from day one regarding Old Oak Common Lane being the sole access both during construction and after operation.
- 67 The provision of an eastern access road would both help mitigate the construction volumes and impact and also provide alternative access for emergency vehicles. If there should be any emergency around the Old Oak Common Area, Wells House Road residents would be isolated and cut off from emergency services. HS2, as a high profile development, could be vulnerable to acts of terrorism.
- 68 In addition, within the Mayor's London Plan, Old Oak Common has been identified as an Opportunity Area and is earmarked for up to 24,000 homes and 55 new jobs to share the space with the HS2/Crossrail interchange between Old Oak Common Lane and Scrubs Lane.
- 69 We thus question the current plans and ask HS2 to consider the station entrance being in the middle of this opportunity area, facing to the east. This would mean that it would be easily accessible to all people moving into the area.

Is there still a case for an interchange at Old Oak Common?

- 70 We question the case for the investment in and interchange at Old Oak Common. The original plans accommodated a link to HS1, Heathrow Express and Cross rail, thus making Old Oak Common a strategic hub.
- 71 However, the plans for the HS1 link have now been scrapped, there are plans to close Heathrow and Cross rail's current plans do not include a station at Old Oak Common.
- 72 In addition, the focus is on transporting passengers to major city centres and thus the focus for London is on Euston and certainly not on Old Oak Common, on the edge of London's Western suburbs.
- 73 We would like to see a revised business plan that outlines the case for the Old Oak Common interchange, based on the evolving plans for London and to understand the cost savings for eradicating the Old Oak Common station and interchange.

Overseeing the process and policing mitigation measures

- 74 After our experience over the past three years of HS2 'community engagement' we have little confidence in the consultation process and responsiveness of HS2. Although they have met with residents regularly, they have often failed to provide responses to residents' questions, have omitted vital information (such as around the potential Old Oak Common road closure) and provided often inaccurate and misleading information (such as informing us that no CPOs were necessary for residents). The process, overall has been time consuming, complex, costly and frustrating. Our trust in HS2 has diminished and we have little confidence in their provision of fair and honest measures without intermediary intervention.
- 75 Communications have been a bone of contention throughout the consultation process. HS2's communications have been infrequent and inconsistent, with not all homes, businesses or communities affected receiving adequate or any communications. In addition, the communications and process have been extremely complex and technical. As such it has excluded a large percentage of the community – particularly those who are not online, have learning disabilities, limited mobility or language differences.
- 76 It should also be noted that the gypsies and travellers off Old Oak Common Lane have still not been contacted, despite the effect it will have on their land. They currently have four horses, chickens, ducks and geese on this land and use Old Common Lane for exercising their horses.

- 77 Therefore we believe it is critical to set up a funded organization, independent of the HS2 and the developers to represent local residents, communities and businesses throughout the process and to act as the main liaison between the community and HS2 and its developers. This will ensure that HS2 is accountable and compliant with building regulations and responds to local needs quickly and effectively. This should be set up with immediate effect.
- 78 Since the Environmental Statement is inconsistent and incomplete, it is likely that our issues that will affect our community will continue to arise. We therefore need to keep the channels of communications open for on-going consultation and dialogue. This will allow us to negotiate issues around the ever-moving HS2 plans and to address new issues as they arise. The changes in the plans for the retaining wall and access to gardens is a good example of the moving goal posts that will need to be addressed.
- 79 This body should be involved throughout the planning, development and construction period and should run regular community forums and meetings with local representatives. This should include technical advisors and should be actively involved with the community and local/central government representatives on a day-to-day basis. We would specifically like the involvement of our MP, Angie Bray, Nick O'Donnell (head of transport at Ealing) and our local councillors.
- 80 It should be noted that HS2 Limited has consistently pushed for a high number of responses and at their meeting of 1st May, 2014 requested that a number of petitions are submitted from Wells House Road for our response to be taken seriously. Within the time given and with complexity and the financial burden to many lower income individuals, this is simply not possible. Residents have therefore agreed that this petition will represent all the residents and home owners within Wells House Road. We feel that an expectation to submit a number of petitions underpins the strategy of HS2 to build barriers to providing the good citizens of Wells House Road with a fair deal.

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 in person or Agent for the Petitioner]

[The Petition should be endorsed on the back as follows:]

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill
PETITION OF Wells House Residents Association

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

[Name, address and telephone number(s) of Agent for the Petitioner, or of the
Petitioner in Person]
Mobin Zolfagharinia