

IN PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

PETITION

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 ethel RAE olive SLOAN

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 Staffordshire, with 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 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 Schedules 2 and 3 to the Bill.
7. Your Petitioner is a single home owner of Rosemary Cottage Main Street Twyford Buckinghamshire, about 500 m from the proposed HS2 line . A resident of the historic village of Twyford for over 35 years, It is a small tranquil village of north Buckinghamshire population 450. It is an agricultural rural area which was part of the Bernwood Forest established in the C10th reaching it's limits during the reign of Henry 2nd . It is an area which has in character changed very little, evidenced by the ridge and furrows in the fields. Your Petitioner has been an active member of the very vibrant community in Twyford and includes a member of the Parish Council, a director of Stop HS2,, member of Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust, Director of the Twyford Village Community Shop and Twyford Youth Club, member of various clubs including TADS (Twyford Amateur Dramatic Society for 34 years), the Gardening Club (TWYGS), the wine club (Plonkers), Voice Fusion singing group, supporter of Twyford Cricket Club, Twyford First School, St Mary's Church and the facility of nearby Great Moor Sailing Club all of which will be impacted to varying degrees by HS2. The overall impact on Your Petitioner's life and the community at large will be serious. Most members are home owners or farmers. The Social calendar for the various groups involve outdoor events which are essential for the funding their future. This includes the school and the church. These events gel the community and have given Twyford is remarkably strong community spirit They are held outdoors on land and properties that will be seriously blighted.

- 7.1 Twyford is located 150m from the line. The closest house does not appear on Your Promoters maps. The village is adjacent to the proposed Steeple Claydon/Calvert Construction Depot and near the proposed East/West line. Between the proposed HS2 line and the village runs the defunct Central Railway line. The village will be impacted 24/7 both during construction and operation in part because of its proximity to the Infrastructure Depot (IMD) and on a section of the line where the train will be running at maximum speed and hence at it's loudest, because the added pantograph noise volume is a result of speed..This added noise would not be a problem if speeds were reduced to those of HS1 and European HSR..
8. Your Petitioner and her rights, interests and properties are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

A) CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

9.Construction impact

- 9.1 The Bill includes powers for the Secretary of State and the Nominated Undertaker to do construction works which are estimated to take 10 years to complete and will include road closures, lorry movements, The roads in the area are rural B and C roads and in their current state of disrepair are barely suitable for car traffic, and, as such, unsuitable and not designed to carry further heavy loads, Twyford, being sited next to a main construction depot will be impacted to varying degrees for the whole 10 years.
- 9.2 Your Petitioner is extremely concerned The Promoter have said potentially the proposal is for 24 hour working, 7 days a week during Construction. Being near a major construction depot at Steeple Claydon/Calvert they area will be impacted for 10 years. The construction period will give rise to dust with the resultant creation of, poor air quality, and. This will inevitably give rise to considerable health concerns as some members already have asthma and respiratory problems,
- 9.3 Dust is of particular concern to Your Petitioner. Apart from the effect on the village as a whole special concern is for users of the recreation field. There is no proposed mitigation during construction for the recreation field. Apart from the regular usage by the village in general, and the Cricket and football Clubs (including the junior cricket teams) the recreation field will be used by Twyford School and therefore includes children as young as 4 whose lungs are still forming and who are extremely vulnerable to air pollution.

9.3.1 Your Petitioner is concerned there have been no mitigation proposals have been put forward to protect the village from noise during construction. No information has been made available regarding noise levels during this period.

9.3.2 Noise is of considerable concern particularly in respect to health and learning. The proposed hours of working will give rise to sleep disturbance.

9.3.3 Noise on the recreation field is of concern from a safety point of view. It is important referees and umpires can be heard, but essential coaches and teachers can be heard during PE lessons for health and safety reasons.

9.3.4 Your Petitioner is very disappointed no sound monitoring was carried out on the recreation field despite the fact it was requested at Community Forums and Roadshows.

10 Remedies for noise and dust particularly in relation to the recreation field

10.1 Planting of trees along the old Central Railway is planned. If this is carried out before the commencement of any work and reasonable size trees used, they would absorb a considerable amount of dust noise and would help mask the visual impact during construction. The timing of this planting is, therefore, critical. The defunct line lies between the village and the proposed HS2 line. The planting should be Native species to the area and should include English Oak and Black Poplars.

10.2 Ambient noise levels should be taken on Twyford recreation field prior to any commencement of work to ensure increase levels of noise can be properly assessed and addressed.

10.3 The Code of Construction should be part of the Hybrid Bill and contractors responsible by law to Parliament. Currently there is no laid down legal recourse of action for breaks in the Code.

11. Traffic during construction and severance of Twyford

11.1. Your Petitioner is concerned about road closures, congestion and diversions particularly during construction. Emergency services response times in the rural area of Twyford are at, if not over, the recommended national response times. Your Petitioner's home is thatched and in the event fire response times are critical.

11.2 Your Petitioner is extremely concerned about the road closures and congestion. There is a great deal of interdependence between the villages in the area of Twyford and north Buckinghamshire. The proposed route severs the villages and particularly during construction road closures and diversions will isolate Twyford. Most of the villages in the area have essential fluidity.

- The majority of people work outside the village, and all the Secondary schools are outside the village.
- Children from local villages attend Twyford school and therefore it is dependent on them to ensure numbers are kept up and it doesn't suffer falling rolls and closure.
- There are no medical facilities in Twyford, the majority of people travelling to Steeple Claydon surgery. Your Petitioner has raised this issue with The Promoter.
- Steeple Claydon surgery also cares for the occupants of the Twyford old people's home, Lime Tree Court.
- The population of Twyford has a higher percentage of retired people than the national average. Inevitably the requirement to have access to their doctor will increase.

Your Petitioner has requested information regarding medical facilities during construction when the population will nearly double, but this problem does not appear to have been publically addressed.

12. Remedies during construction and the severance of Twyford

12.1 There is next to no accommodation for workers in the area of Twyford and workers will have to travel to and the Construction Depot/IMD. Your Petitioner and Community Forum members have requested a halt on the East West line which will enable workers to travel to and from work by rail from Local large conurbations where there is accommodation.

12.2 Your Petitioner suggests transport of heavy materials and plant be transported by East West Rail to the Construction Depot, taking it off the roads.

12.3 Your Petitioner suggest the excessive footprint of the safeguarded area is used for the movement of plant, materials and workers along the footprint from the depot keeping traffic off the narrow roads.

12.4 Full medical services should be made available for workers on site at the Construction Depot and not put pressure on local overstretched services.

12.5 Should road closures make access to Steeple Claydon surgery become impossible for any length of time Your Petitioner suggests provision should be made by The Promoter, at its cost, with the surgery to have an outreach service in Twyford for that period.

It is important to note that there are no adequate public transport services to the next nearest surgeries at either Bicester or Buckingham. Your Petitioner is concerned some of the villagers suffer from long term illnesses and

continuity of treatment and medical practitioner contact is of utmost importance to them.

13 Impact on utility infrastructure during construction

13.1 Your Petitioner is conscious that the village infrastructure and utilities are at their limit. Fresh and foul water systems are inadequate and regularly fail in the area. Your Petitioners fear any added pressure from the Depot will lead to further flooding within the village. During construction there will at times be more than twice the population of workers to Twyford's current population putting an immense strain on facilities.

14 Remedies for Impact on utility infrastructure during construction

14.1 The Construction Depot should be totally independent of local utilities, particularly fresh and foul water services.

14.2 Surface water drainage systems should be maintained at all times. Currently they flow precariously through fields and on into local rivers. This system is very fragile and, if no assurances are given the village will flood in heavy rain although the fields themselves do not flood to any depth.

15 Impact of construction on farming in Twyford

15.1 Your Petitioner has chosen to live in the rural agricultural area of North Buckinghamshire and is horrified at the impact the HS2 line will have on most of the farmers in the area. The very existence of the farms is under threat. For some their families are affected either through employment or some because they related to the farm owners. Agriculture is vital to the way of life in Twyford.

15.2 Your Petitioner is appalled that the design of the line has paid no heed to the requirements of farmers and farmers suggestions to improve their situation have been ignored. It is very evident that the design is a desk top design with no knowledge of grass roots of the area. Farmers have tried to engage with the Promoter through Roadshows, Community Forums and separate meetings, but The Promoter have to date paid no heed to their plight.

15.3 Portway Farm is one half of a farming operation the other half being Shepherd's Furze Farm As a result both are totally dependent on each other to sustain the business. HS2 severs the physical link between the two farms. Your Petitioner was horrified to hear only 6 months ago that Shepherds Furze was to be used as a dumping ground for sustainable waste from London tunnelling. Prior to this late announcement there was already considerable land take from the farms particularly for the construction but also the subsequent operation of the line, left them at a minimum for a viable operation.

15.4 The design of the line and the arbitrary positioning of auxiliary things like the proposed balancing lakes leaves large areas of their farmland either inaccessible or unviable.

15.5 The dairy of Portway Farm /Shepherds Furze employs people from the village. The impact on most of the farms in the area will be to create a loss of employment. This is of great concern to Your Petitioner.

15.6 Home Farm also in Twyford will be seriously impacted being left with no access onto most of it's land. The Promoter have currently made no provision to give access across the line to its adjacent fields.

16 Remedies for problems relating to agricultural enterprises

16.1 Real consideration should be given to suggestions from land owners regarding the siting of such things as balancing lakes to minimise useful land take.

16.2 Your Petitioner feels insufficient thought and consideration was given to the decision of Shepherds Furze Farm as the location for the London tunnelling sustainable waste. The Calvert landfill area operators have said they desperately need sustainable waste for landscaping as landfill pits are filled and for the incinerator site when completed. HS2 will have built a gantry for off-loading waste from London on the East West Line link for the landfill at Calvert. This could also be used for the sustainable waste from tunnelling for FCC, the landfill operators, to use for the landfill landscaping.

17 Other concerns

17.1 Your Petitioner is concerned that the construction period will impact on the church and will reduce the usage of the church. The village is not rich and the

costs of running the Norman church Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Commonly called St Mary's Church) are very high. Any reduction in usage would cut vital revenue to this Grade 1 listed historic building. It is praised as being of great value by both in Pevsner and Simon Jenkins in 1000 Best Churches. It has some of the oldest pews in the country

17.2 Your Petitioner is concerned about severance between communities. All the villages have friends and relatives in neighbouring villages. The care support network for example for elderly relatives and child care is essential where services have been cut and in less affluent areas like North Buckinghamshire..

17.3 Your Petitioner is concerned that in the Environmental Statement, issued with the Hybrid Bill, for the first time, announced the use of part of Mill Lane for access to the line during construction. This is a BOAT and not a highway. It passes stabling for young race horses and is used recreationally by Your Petitioner, walkers, children and cyclists. It is also an emergency entrance to the village if/when Main Street Twyford is blocked.

17.4 Your Petitioner is concerned about noise levels and dust at Great Moor Lake. The noise will be magnified across water and the visual impact seriously intrusive, plus the visual impact on this beautiful place of tranquility must be treated with sensitivity providing the best in practice mitigation and approved by its trustees

17.5 Your Petitioner requests that a full environmental impact survey is carried out on the Great Moor property. The Board advise one has not been fully carried out and bearing in mind the proximity to nature reserves including under water links this is an important omission. It is set adjacent to the BBOWT Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust) Jubilee Lake Nature Reserve and benefits from the biodiversity of the nature reserve.

17.6 Your Petitioners are concerned about the impact of the line, both visually and audibly, past Great Moor Sailing Lake. It is a tranquil area for recreational use with 300 family members and over 2000 users including many Twyfordians. It is an important education centre used for Duke of Edinburgh Awards and a recognised training centre by the Royal Yachting Association sailing lessons, scouts, cadets and the Royal Logistic Corps. It is also used for all other outdoor activities some of which include fishing, walking, camping, sub aqua and canoeing. It is the only facility of its kind for 24 miles.

17.7 Your Petitioner is concerned that there is no mitigation against noise on the North East side of the line by Twyford. There are homes and farmsteads

which will be totally open to the full impact of the line on a viaduct and that will hence be seriously impacted.

17.8 As a member of BBOWT Your Petitioner is particularly upset and disturbed by the dismissive treatment of wildlife, Nature Reserves and SSSIs. Much of the area in North Buckinghamshire has been relatively undisturbed for 1000 years, hence the ancient woodland areas and richness of biodiversity. This is particularly noticeable in the areas under the care of BBOWT (Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust). Much of this biodiversity has spread to surrounding areas including Twyford and includes red listed species. The impact especially during the disturbance of construction is of considerable concern to Your Petitioners

B OPERATIONAL IMPACT

18. Operational Noise Vibration and Light

18.1 Currently Twyford and the surrounding area are in a tranquil area as defined by CPRE and an area of night time darkness. People moved there for this peace, dark and tranquillity. Your Petitioners are concerned that the noise and night time light from the line while in operation is excessive and the proposed mitigation inadequate. Twyford is a village member of CPRE.

18.2 Your Petitioner is concerned that the thresholds adopted in the Environmental Statement for noise limits are set well above those set by the World Health Organisation (WHO) giving rise to serious health problems. This is borne out by the Institute for Acoustics. Twyford will be particularly affected being part of the fastest section of the route the speed is the cause of the high noise level made worse by the fact that at the speeds through Twyford added noise will come from the pantograph. From the photo montages it appears the bund by Twyford will not be high enough to mask this noise.

18.3 Your Petitioners are concerned that noise levels will prohibit the outdoor social events. These are a vital element to the community spirit of the village.

18.4 Your Petitioner is seriously concerned about the safety of school children using the recreation field for PE where they cannot hear teachers

18.5 Your Petitioner is concerned that the thriving Cricket Club will be unable to continue to use the cricket pitch.

18.6 The noise levels from HS2 will prevent friends Your Petitioner using their gardens and opening their windows between the hours 5.00 am to 12.00 midnight (the hours of operation.) Your Petitioner consider this an infringement of their rights and liberties..

18.7 By virtue of it's proximity to the Steeple Claydon Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (IMD) that will be working at night, much of the noise will continue throughout the night.

18.8 Your Petitioner is concerned the Environmental Statement does not give a maximum noise level. This is particularly relevant for public rights of way crossing the line.

18.9 Your Petitioner is concerned about the effect of the noise levels on the Dairy cattle. There is evidence that excessive noise results in milk yields being reduced together with an increase in the number of calves aborted.

18.10 Your Petitioner has requested the Promoter for information on vibration, especially ground vibration, but we have been unable to get answers and responses. These requests have been made at Roadshows and Community Forums. This is of particular concern to the Grade 1 listed church in Twyford and the adjacent St Mary's House.

19 Remedies to prevent noise, vibration and light pollution

19.1 Your Petitioner feels the height of the line can be reduced. The height is excessive. At Community Forums Your Petitioner has requested The Promoter speak to the local Drainage Board and farmers who have hands on knowledge of the water systems in the area. The Environment Agency does not have such up to date hands on information. Farmers have laid extensive drainage systems to take heavy rainfall.

19.2 If the line is lowered

- The existing height of the bunding past Twyford would help to mitigate noise from the pantograph
- Would help toward a cut and cover requested by Chetwode (further up the line)

19.3 If the speed of the train is reduced to speeds comparable with other HSR in Europe there would be little or no noise from the pantograph. If the speed is reduced the train would have more route flexibility to avoid the severe Environmental damage it is currently inflicting.

19.4 If the line is straightened and moved further away from Twyford to an alignment preferred by Arup the noise levels in Twyford would be reduced.

19.5 Your Petitioner requested more information is made available regarding vibration and a full survey is carried out at the church Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary prior to construction and St Mary's House which is a C14th Hall house with questionable foundations.

20 Biodiversity impacts during operations

20.1 Your Petitioner is really disturbed that a comparative Environmental Impact Assessment was not carried out on all 3 major route options. This is counter to the Department for the Environment recommendations. Alternative routes, as with HS1, followed existing transport corridors where mitigation is largely already in place..

20.2 The full stretch in North Buckinghamshire, north of Waddesden is through the 1000 year old Bernwood Forest country. It includes several SSSIs and Nature Reserves mainly in the care of BBOWT. Much of these are relatively undisturbed and have extremely rare species including bats, birds, butterflies and plants. Your Petitioner finds it heart breaking that Government can consider demolishing the delicate habitat of these species.

20.3 Your Promoters have said they will not intrude into the Sheephouse Wood SSSI, but Your Petitioner is disturbed at the misrepresentation of the whole truth. Although the actual HS2 line does not encroach, the chosen alignment of HS2 will mean the alignment of the East West line will have to be moved and be pushed into Sheephouse Wood. Your Promoters were advised of potential problems in the Sheephouse corridor nearly 5 years ago, at the first AOS consultation at Euston Station. Taking this virgin land is the cheap option, but environmentally the most destructive and costly.

20.4 Your Petitioner is disappointed at the solutions for Bechsteins bats. North Bucks bats and BBOWT feel they are totally inadequate.

21 Remedies for biodiversity.

- 21.1 Your Petitioner feels the fragile environment of the Sheepphouse Wood corridor should not be tampered with. This can be achieved by tunnelling through this section
- 21.2 Alternative to tunnelling would be to use land take on the landfill side of the line and leave East West Rail on their current alignment.
- 21.3 Your Petitioner feels it is essential advice from experts in their field are heeded and the easy cheap solutions are not taken at the expense of protected species. They have protection orders on them for an excellent reason. Our Government and country as a whole are critical of other countries for their mal treatment and lack of due care and protection of rare species. Your Petitioner feels the UK is in a position to set an example and should follow best practice.

Your Petitioner is very disappointed all the points raised have been raised with Your Promoter many times, many 4 years ago. They have been raised at roadshows and at Community Forums.

Most of the items covered in the Community Forums were never resolved and questions remain unanswered.

22 Compensation

- 22.1 Your Petitioner lives outside the safeguarded zone of the HS2 line and therefore will not be entitled to voluntary purchase. Your Petitioner have lived in an area which is severely blighted and has been unable to move, but has watched the market value of their property drain away. Your Petitioner is retired, but is not been entitled to the EHS scheme. Many people live in properties they bought as an investment with a view to selling to supplement their pensions. They find themselves living in a house which is too large because their children have grown up and moved away and one which is expensive to run. The latest proposals put forward by Your Promoters do not change their circumstances and they feel their right of choice and their freedom to move have been removed unless they are prepared and can afford to take large fiscal losses. The latest proposals for compensation do not change their circumstances. These are circumstances over which they have had no control but have had forced on them by Government.

22.2 Your Petitioner has only ever asked for fairness in whichever Compensation scheme is to be adopted. The only fair proposal Your Petitioner has seen to date is the Property Bond scheme put forward by Action Alliance. This guarantees a payment bond to the value of the property at an unblighted price.

22.3 Although Your Petitioner appreciates Government want to keep the costs of HS2 down, they do feel it is at their expense. The reality is, to give fair compensation would not impact greatly on the budget, but it would create some good will and defuse some of the anger of those inflicted by the HS2 proposal has created.

23 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your Petitioner should not be allowed to pass into law.

24 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 Petitioners in the premises as your Honourable House shall deem meet.

AND your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Signed

3rd May 2014

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HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL
ETHEL RAE OLIVE SLOAN

AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

ETHEL RAE OLIVE SLOAN

