

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 MR EDWARD HUNT AND MRS CHARLOTTE HUNT

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 Petitioners live at 2 Chestnut Close, Handsacre, Rugeley, Staffordshire after moving in July 2008. The house is situated in a small residential estate at the "entrance" to the village and lies 95 metres from the centre-line of the proposed development. There are two access routes to your Petitioners house with the first from the North through the village of Armitage and the second from a Southerly direction (Lichfield and Birmingham) along the B5014 Lichfield Road. Your Petitioners live alone at the premises commuting on a daily basis by car as both are shift workers within the emergency services. The current proposals do not include plans to demolish the house however construction traffic is planned to operate extensively in numerous locations in the immediate locality, the route is planned to be raised by up to 10 metres above ground level in the immediate area and a large set of points are

to be installed approximately 100 metres from the house where the development merges with the West Coast Main Line.

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

9. The current bill includes proposals for a new permanent access road to be built running from Hayes Meadow Primary School on Spode Avenue to an area approximately 100 metres from your Petitioners house. In this area it is stated that a "relocatable equipment building" will be constructed with little detail provided, access will be via Tuppenhurst Lane to the North causing an increase in construction traffic in this area. The immediate dangers of locating such a development next to the local primary school are obvious. Twenty four hour lighting, noise and dust pollution will also undoubtedly adversely affect your Petitioners house whilst construction takes place.

The main access route to the South of your Petitioners house (A515 then the B5014 Lichfield Road) will be overwhelmed with traffic as presently the current bill details construction compounds are to be based at "Harvey's Rough" (Hanch), A515/Wood End Lane, Wood End Lane Roadhead and Curborough. Cummulatively these are expected to accommodate approximately 1500 two-way lorry movements per day over a 5 – 7 year period. HS2 Ltd term the traffic travelling to and from Harveys Rough, the compound closest to your Petitioners property, to be minimal when in reality due to the nature of the road infrastructure in the area the compound should not be looked at in isolation. Traffic travelling to and from both the compound at Curborough and Wood End Lane Roadhead must also be taken into consideration. These vehicles will be travelling along the same roads. These are roads that are already in a poor state of repair in places due to adverse weather conditions over recent winters and this will only hasten their decline. In conjunction with the undoubted diversions and possible closures between the Seedy Mill site and Handsacre this will in effect mean that the route from your Petitioners house to Lichfield, Birmingham and beyond will be closed off with the only alternative being lengthy and costly diversionary routes – extra costs incurred both financially and in time. The cumulative effects of the proposed construction compounds, associated traffic, dirt, dust, noise and new buildings all in the immediate vicinity will have a devastating effect on your Petitioners house and lifestyle. The Human Right Act (1988) preserves the right to peaceful enjoyment of your property and the current bill proposals undoubtedly infringe upon that right.

Your Petitioners also draw attention to the lack of consultation concerning the proposed bill, the phase 1 HS2 development often being described as "London to Birmingham" with little or no reference made to Handsacre. Indeed, the HS2 website still describes the development as "London to the West Midlands" with Staffordshire seemingly the forgotten county. Public maps only show the planned line of the route itself with no detail provided concerning the associated construction works, road closures, planned traffic movements etc – many of these details are extremely difficult to find within the proposals and anecdotally it is apparent that because of this many of those affected simply are unaware – a number of your Petitioners neighbours are elderly and do not use the internet etc. The original maps published when the scheme was announced showed the connection of the highspeed line with the West Coast Mainline occurring in Elmhurst, whilst still local this is approximately three miles away. In addition current plans appear to indicate that development work will end before the line enters the village of Handsacre however when the detail is examined it is clear this is simply not the case and will have a severe detrimental effect on your Petitioners. The "relocatable equipment building" or later termed 'maintenance depot' can clearly be seen in line with your Petitioners property.

Finally your Petitioners draw attention to the Rural Support Zone (RSZ) as documented in the current HS2 compensation proposals, primarily in the vicinity of Handsacre and your Petitioners. It is known that a consequence of any property falling inside the RSZ is the automatic triggering of compensation payments, as the proposed line runs through countryside approaching Handsacre the RSZ is detailed on both sides of the track and as such although there are very few houses in this area these would obviously therefore be eligible for payment. As the track then enters the village of Handsacre the RSZ continues on the Eastern side through the village (again where there are no current buildings) where construction work is proposed to take place however the RSZ on the Western side abruptly ends exactly where the track enters the village – it is more than mere coincidence that buildings, including your Petitioners property, are located in this area and that the RSZ has undoubtedly been designed in this way to avoid having to pay relevant compensation payments.

This is quite simply unjust and unfair.

Communication has been entered into with HS2 Ltd by your Petitioners concerning this subject however the responses received have been unsatisfactory.

10. Your Petitioners object to the powers that are proposed to be provided by the Bill to the Secretary of State and the Nominated Undertaker and respectfully submit that the Bill should be amended or undertakings should be required so that HS2 Limited, the Secretary of State and/or the Nominated Undertaker must review the construction strategy for the project and its related works by considering their cumulative impacts on Your Petitioners and immediate vicinity.

In relation to the proposed development of a new access road running from Spode Avenue (Hayes Meadow Primary School) to a new relocatable equipment building this particularly inappropriate proposal should quite simply be located elsewhere. It will be appreciated that your Petitioners are not engineers and cannot advise exactly where it should be placed however it is entirely inappropriate for it to remain in its current proposed position. An alternative would be an access road directly from either Tuppenhurst Lane to the East or Shaw Lane to the South. This solution may prove to be an adequate compromise for the safety and health of many children.

With regards to the dust generated, undertakings are respectfully requested that the area surrounding the construction is sprayed at least every 30 minutes to counter this issue. Undertakings are also respectfully requested that construction work be confined to daylight hours with no noise or lorry movements before 8am.

With regards to the immense traffic issues expected to the South of Your Petitioners undertakings are requested that traffic is restricted before 9am and between 5pm and 7pm along the A515. As a main thoroughfare for both Armitage with Handsacre and the surrounding villages this would lessen the impact of anticipated congestion along a single carriageway road where the national speed limit is in force.

It is respectfully requested that an undertaking be granted so as to enforce a full and adequate consultation in relation to all aspects of work to be carried out in the vicinity of your Petitioners property and the local area. This should be in conjunction with communication of the proposed works in the local newspaper ("Lichfield Mercury"), noticeboards and letters to individual households. It is respectfully requested that this should detail all aspects of compounds to be assembled, roads to be closed / built, projected traffic movements and visual diagrams of the development itself. It is respectfully requested that such details listed cover an area within a 5 mile radius of Handsacre.

Finally, it is respectfully requested that the RSZ be extended as it enters Handsacre along the Lichfield Road on the Western side of the track so as to include all properties as far as Barn Road at a width of 120m from the centre – line of the track.

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

12. 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

Mr Edward Hunt

Mrs Charlotte Hunt

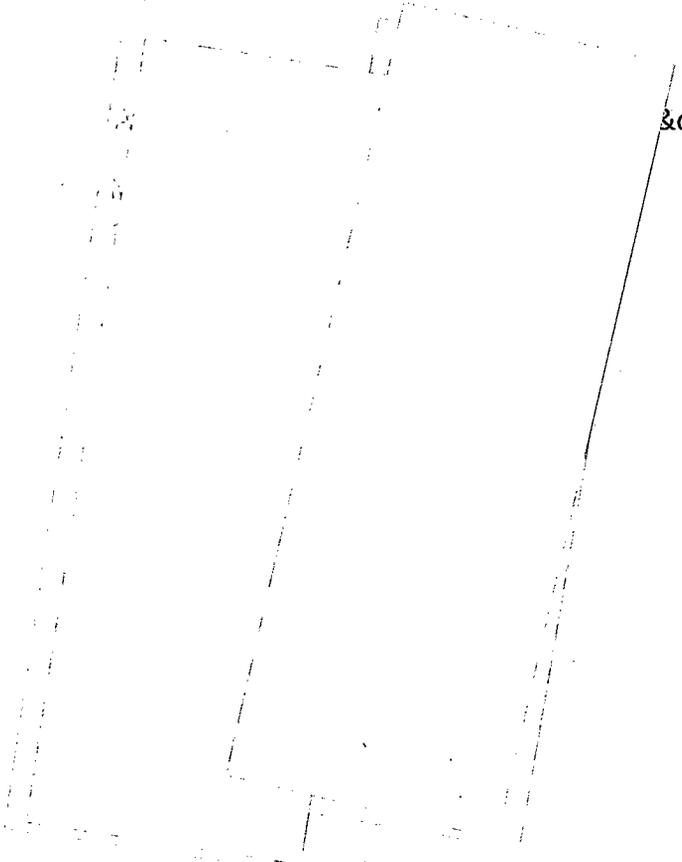


IN PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013-14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

PETITION OF Mr Edward Hunt and Mrs Charlotte Hunt



&c