

PETITION AGAINST A PRIVATE BILL

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Against – on merits – Praying to be heard in Person , &c.

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

THE HUMBLE PETITION of ALICE AND ILSE GRAY

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 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 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 are householders living at 12 Princess Road, London, NW1 8JJ, with a child, aged 10yrs, who attends Primrose Hill Primary School in Princess Road. Alice is a governor at this school which will be affected by the proposed underground construction works in Princess Road. Your Petitioners' property will not be demolished as a result of the Bill, but your Petitioners have received notice that if the Bill passes into law it will confer various rights of compulsory acquisition or use over that property. From September 2016, the child is intending to attend nearby Haverstock Secondary School situated on Haverstock Hill, very near to roads which will be used by lorry traffic during the construction of the Scheme. Alice cycles to work around Camden and Islington, and would be affected by air pollution from increased construction traffic. Ilse, a pensioner, mostly travels on public transport, especially buses, the routes and frequency of which would be severely affected by construction works and related traffic.
8. Your Petitioners and their interests are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
9. Your Petitioners have received Notice No. C271/009101 and Notice No. C271/007633, dated 25 November 2013, from Winkworth Sherwood and Eversheds (Parliamentary Agents) stating that 12 Princess Road is in the group of properties under Schedule A affected by proposed HS2 underground works to the sewer pipe(s) along Princess Road. The notices state that "the Act shall authorise the compulsory acquisition of [cellars fronting 1-65 Princess Road] or the subsoil or undersurface of or airspace over that property or a right to use that property". Since one of these cellars is open to - and thus an integral part of - the rest of the house at 12 Princess Road and is where the central heating boiler is situated for the basement, this poses

considerable problems with regard to the insurance of the property in the event of flooding, subsidence, or any other damage to this part of the property, or any other part of the property, both resulting from the proposed works and from any other cause. No compensation has been set aside, or offered, in the event of any HS2 underground works-related disturbance or damage to the structure of this terraced house or to any of its neighbours.

10. In addition, Thames Water requires your Petitioners to pay for extra insurance for the connecting pipes from the house to the road, which pass through the compulsory purchased area. No indication has been given as to the responsibility (e.g. for maintenance of pipes during the period of the proposed works or afterwards) or insurance liability for any damage to these pipes resulting from the proposed works, or from any other cause, either during the period of the works or afterwards.

11. Furthermore, the proposed works are to the dirty water sewer running the length of Princess Road and no indication has been given as to how any of the households, or the primary school (currently approximately 475 children plus 73 teaching and support staff), is supposed to cope without use of toilets or waste water facilities for the 6 or more months in which this sewer is out of action.

12. The Bill includes powers for the Secretary of State and the Nominated Undertaker to undertake works of construction which are estimated to take 10 years to complete and will include heavy goods vehicle (HGV) and lorry movements, and subsequent creation of dust and noise, and poor air quality. All the children walking or cycling to schools in the borough, and Haverstock Secondary School in particular, will be adversely affected by worse air pollution and poor air quality caused by increased dust in the air from HGVs and construction lorries filled with spoil and using the proposed routes from Euston to carry this to disposal sites. These lorries would pass in front of Haverstock School in their thousands every week. In early April 2014, there were reports of an increase in admissions to local London and national Accident & Emergency departments of children and adults in respiratory distress due to an unusual combination of vehicle emissions and 'Sahara Dust'. In relation to this, comments that were made in the press by eminent medical researchers such as Jonathan Grigg - professor of paediatric respiratory and environmental medicine at Queen Mary University of London - about the strong evidence for diesel pollutants having an effect on cognitive function in children, and long-term exposure to air pollution suppressing lung function and leading to vulnerability through life, and also from Frank Kelly - professor of environmental health at King's College, London - that the air people breathe has an impact on life expectancy (The Guardian, 29.04.2014), indicate serious threats to these children's health from the combination of increased emissions and dust from these vehicles. Gridlock from increased traffic would further increase vehicle emissions and the negative impact on the health of children attending schools situated close to these routes, and

that of any adults teaching them, especially those who already have heart or respiratory conditions. Your Petitioners humbly suggest that the increased burden on NHS services and the short-term and long-term costs of treating respiratory and other conditions arising from, or exacerbated by, this construction work in Camden should also be taken into account in calculating the costs of constructing the HS2 terminus at Euston.

13. Accepting the estimate of at least 10 years for construction, in 2016-2021, children commencing in year 7 would be exposed to continuous noise from this increased HGV and lorry traffic for their entire school careers up to GCSE (or equivalent) level and those commencing in 2016-18 would further experience this throughout their sixth form studies. This would particularly affect concentration in teaching areas with outside windows, and affect sports and other teaching in outside playground areas, and thus negatively impact on potential academic achievement for large numbers of children.
14. The Environmental Statement (ES) produced by HS2 Ltd appears to grossly underestimate existing peak time and off-peak traffic and the effect of the HS2 construction works at Euston and elsewhere on traffic congestion in Camden. Your Petitioners would direct the attention of the Honourable House to another petitioner, Camden Council, which has produced its own statistics indicating a much heavier existing traffic flow and pedestrian footfall, and thus a much worse impact of proposed HS2 construction traffic than that presented in the ES. This will make it very difficult for pensioners, such as Ilse Gray, and others with reduced mobility, who rely on either public or private transport, to get to shops, health or other services and businesses, and to travel around and across the Borough to visit friends and relatives.
15. The construction works will lead to significant increases in two of the most serious air pollutants, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) which will be compounded by the removal of over 200 trees from the borough. There are also likely to be increases in pollutants as a result of the operation of HS2. Air pollution in Camden is already high with resulting mounting health impacts, in particular links to heart disease, asthma and cancer. Alice Gray already has heart and respiratory problems and as a cyclist in the Borough would be more heavily exposed to the adverse effects of these increases. London is already failing binding EU legal limits for NO₂, and facing an increasing likelihood of attracting fines for failing to meet these limits, which may be passed on to local authorities. As ratepayers, your Petitioners would then also have to bear the financial cost of the construction and operation of HS2 further increasing these emissions.
16. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that powers proposed to be provided by the Bill to the Secretary of State and the Nominated Undertaker should be amended or undertakings should be required to be given 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 activities by putting weight on their cumulative impacts on area communities and come forward with necessary changes arising from that review before works packages design and tendering strategies have been finalised.

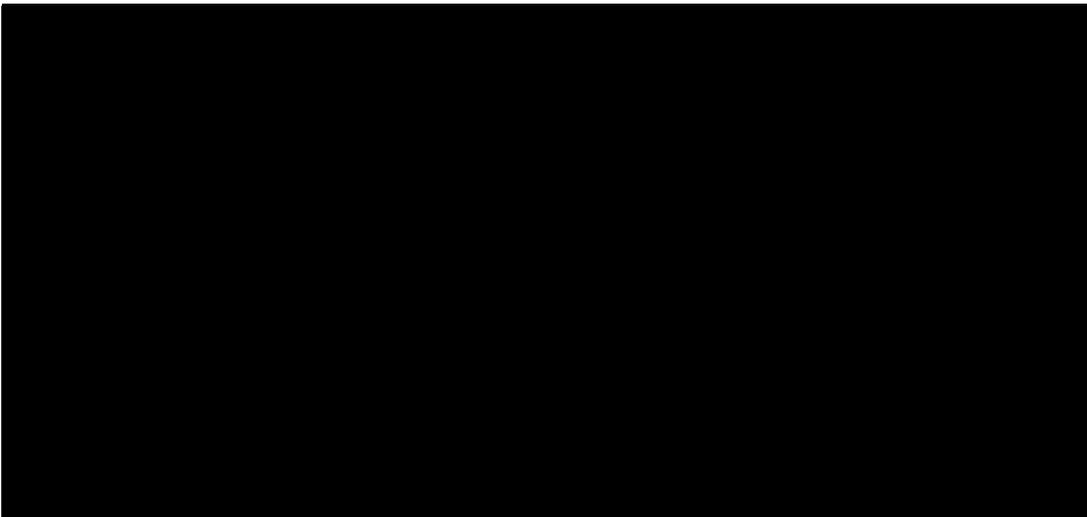
17. Your Petitioners further respectfully submit that Old Oak Common should become the terminus rather than Euston. This would avoid all the environmental, health and social damage that building and operating the line between Old Oak Common and Euston would do to this area. It would also save a huge amount of resource costs. The cost of building this section of HS2 runs into £billions (the anticipated amount should have been clarified by the time petitions are heard). In addition, there would be considerable savings in construction costs at Euston itself. Old Oak Common has better current and potential transport connections, particularly to the Crossrail works currently being completed across London.
18. In the light of the serious negative effects on education, health, and to quality of life and property rights anticipated as a result of situating the HS2 terminus at Euston, more time needs to be given to finding ways to mitigate these, and if Old Oak Common is not accepted as the most suitable terminus then consideration needs to be given both to alternative plans for Euston, such as the Double Decked Down proposal - produced by local architects in response to HS2 Ltd's initial plans - and to other alternative terminus sites, as well as to compensation for financial or other loss suffered by householders and businesses directly affected by the proposed HS2-related construction works in Camden who are not currently being offered this. Evidence from various campaign groups, such as SOS Camden, The Camden Cutting Group, and bodies such as Camden Council should be given considerable weight in the light of inadequate surveys and research by HS2 Ltd on the high cost and negative impact of current plans for siting the HS2 terminus at Euston.
19. Your Petitioners urge the Committee to say that HS2's London terminus should not be at Euston but at Old Oak Common. If problems of capacity were to arise, origin and destination surveys of HS2 passengers should be undertaken to give a much more reliable indication of what remedial action would be most effective, and whether its cost could be justified, than is possible now. All that has to be done at Old Oak Common now, beyond providing the connection between HS2 and Crossrail, and possibly also a link to Heathrow, is to ensure that the station is laid out in a way that would facilitate, or at least not inhibit, the possible provision of connections to other lines later.
20. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioners respectfully submit that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, with the substitution of Old Oak Common for Euston as the London terminus for HS2, clauses in

Schedule 1 so far affecting your Petitioners, should not be allowed to pass into law.

21. 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 Themselves, 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.



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