

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 ELIZABETH ANN POOLEY

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 lives at 11 Meades Lane, Chesham, HP5 1ND on a small estate that borders on to the Meades Water Gardens. Having suffered periods of drought, the River Chess, a highly valued chalk stream, which runs through the Gardens, is presently in good shape after a very wet winter. As a dog owner, Your Petitioner frequently enjoys the tranquil atmosphere that it provides. Your Petitioner also works in the town and sees from her office window, overlooking the railway station, the number of parties of ramblers who come to the area to explore its beauty.
8. Your Petitioner and her rights and interests are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
9. Your Petitioner travels regularly throughout the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and will find that access to many local communities, as well as the County Town and others further north will be denied or compromised for many years during the construction of the line. Roads unaffected by the actual construction work will be taken over by lorries taking away the spoil, thus causing congestion, not to mention damage to unsuitable roads. The response time of Emergency Services could well be increased to an unacceptable degree.
10. Many bridleways along the Misbourne Valley will be closed during construction work or diverted, while some will be closed permanently.
11. It is a travesty that Ancient Woodland should suffer in an AONB. Your Petitioner feels that this shows only too clearly the lack of preparation that went into the choosing of the route and highlights the fact that no Environmental Statement was called for at the outset of the project.

12. Whereas Your Petitioner is not allowed to plead for the cancellation of the entire project on this occasion or, at least, continuous tunnelling for the project throughout the AONB, she is greatly concerned by the amount of power that each train will consume and feels that the case for more capacity on existing lines would be much 'greener' and would provide the population of England as a whole with an improved rail network.
13. Your Petitioner wishes to draw to your attention the 'Green Route' proposed by Chiltern District Council, The Chilterns Conservation Society and other Groups, as drawn up by Peter Brett Associates at their behest, in 'High Speed Rail in the Chilterns: Feasibility Study of Alternative Tunnelling Options'. This Green Route would help to mitigate some of the outrageous aspects of the presently proposed route.
14. For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submits that, unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your Petitioner, should not be allowed to pass into law.
15. There are other clauses and provisions of the Bill which, if passed into law as they now stand will prejudicially affect your Petitioner and her rights, interests and property and for which no adequate provision is made to protect your Petitioner.

YOUR PETITIONER 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 Petitioner 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 Petitioner will ever pray, &c.

Signed ELIZABETH ANN POOLEY



1

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AGAINST, By Counsel, &c.

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