

IN PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 2013–14

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

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 the Sibleys Rise Residents' Group

SHEWETH as follows:-

- 1 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."
- 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 3, along with Schedules 1 to 4, authorise and detail the works to be done in relation to the construction and the operation of the railway (also "HS2") mentioned in paragraph 1 above, including the associated stopping up and construction of highways. The railway works themselves are detailed in Schedule 1 and referred to as "the Scheduled Works". Clauses 4 to 18 of the Bill, along with Schedules 5 to 15, deal with compulsory acquisition of land, the extinction and exclusion of rights over land and the temporary possession and use of land.
- 4 Clauses 19 to 36, along with Schedules 16 to 26, provide for deemed planning permission and deregulation, including in relation to listed buildings, ancient monuments, burial grounds, commons, water and noise.
- 5 Clauses 37 to 44, along with Schedules 27 to 29, deal with the regulation of the railway and provide for the appointment of a nominated undertaker to exercise the powers in the Bill ("the Nominated Undertaker"). Clauses 45 and 46, along with Schedules 30 and 31, make provision for statutory undertakers with Clause 47 providing a power to compulsorily acquire land for regeneration or relocation and clause 48 provides a power to carry out reinstatement works.
- 6 Other clauses within the Bill make provision for the Crown, for further high speed railway works and for the application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (defined as the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 2011/1824) or any regulations replacing them).

Your Petitioner

- 7 Your Petitioner is the Sibleys Rise Residents' Group (SRRG). Sibleys Rise is a cul-de-sac near to the cross roads between Kings Lane and Bayleys Hatch (which becomes Frith Hill South Heath Leg (SHL)). There are 40 properties in Sibleys Rise, with 32 members of SRRG. Sibleys Rise includes the only social housing in South Heath. SRRG was originally formed in 2013 to share resources and co-ordinate local activities in response to HS2's plans for the area. A full list of members is available by writing to the Chair at the Petitioner's address.
- 8 South Heath is a community of about 350 properties and 800 residents in Buckinghamshire and within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB). South Heath lies about 1.6km east of the A413 (the main road from Amersham to Wendover) and 2km east of Great Missenden (that requires crossing over the A413 to reach).
- 9 SRRG is a member of the Residents' Environmental Protection Association (REPA) established in 2013. REPA is an association of individuals and local groups mainly in the South Heath area (including Hyde Heath, Hyde End, and Potter Row) working to gain more effective mitigations from HS2.
- 10 Your Petitioner's members' properties within Sibleys Rise are specially and directly affected as:
- Every property is within 200 metres of the centre line of HS2
 - Eight of the homes on the west side are within 120 metres, and several others have gardens within 120m.
 - The communal green space with its swing for children is within 150m
 - The lengthy construction works will cause immense disruption, noise, loss of rural character, views, dust, dirt to the immediate surrounding area.
 - It is part of the community of South Heath¹ that even the ES recognises is blighted and will suffer significant community-wide impacts.
- 11 HS2 will run in the South Heath green tunnel just behind Sibleys Rise to the west, but the North portal is within 300m and so Sibleys Rise will not be adequately protected from operational noise. Sibleys Rise currently enjoys the benefits of its "own" ancient woodland (Sibley's Coppice) which abuts the end of the cul-de-sac and has a footpath entrance from the Rise, much used by your petitioners. This coppice will be bisected by HS2, which will cut a swathe through it, taking 2.6ha of "irreplaceable" ancient woodland. With construction activities and the trace so near, Sibleys Rise will be subject to noise and other highly negative environmental impacts during construction.
- 12 Sibleys Rise is not itself a construction route, but access to it is entirely via construction routes. Besides the entrance to Sibley's Coppice, Sibleys Rise has a small green open area with a swing popular with young children and their mothers. During construction this will be exposed to excessive noise. A number of the children attend the Misbourne School at Great Missenden, walking there along Frith Hill (SHL), which will be closed for 18 months to 2 years, with no practicable alternative walking route.
- 13 Your Petitioner's members are particularly affected by the damage to the general area. Many are keen and frequent walkers, who enjoy the tranquillity of the numerous footpaths and quiet lanes of the area, including the immediately adjacent footpaths to Mantle's Wood and Little Missenden, and through the ancient woodlands Sibley's Coppice. The tranquillity and beauty of the area, which is best enjoyed through the network of public rights of way (PROW), is the reason that many residents chose to move here. Furthermore matters that

¹ Non-Technical Summary, p.44, section 7.4 (Community).

make the area generally less attractive will impact on the property values of your Petitioner's members.

- 14 Your Petitioner's members' rights, interests and property are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioner objects for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.

Your Petitioners' concerns, objections and request for alteration of the Bill

- 15 Your Petitioner's residents will suffer a range of severe and adverse effects by reason of the Bill. Your Petitioner requests that a bored Chiltern Tunnel traverse the entire of the AONB as it would address most, if not all, of its concerns, and will reduce the impact on the AONB. Currently less than half the AONB is in a bored tunnel, and HS2 bisects the AONB at its widest part.
- 16 The proposed line cuts through Sibley's Coppice and along the east end of the east side of Sibleys Rise. Sibleys Rise is greatly affect by the green tunnel and associated works as outlined in Clause 2, Schedule 2 Volume 2.1 plan sheet Nos 2-24 & 2-25 . It will also be affected by the transportation of large quantities of spoil along the trace from the works to the south.
- 17 The main concerns are:
- a. The long term damage and permanent injury from visual, landscape and acoustic impacts of HS2 on the AONB, and South Heath in particular. South Heath is not currently in any sort of transport corridor (the A413 and Chiltern rail line are more than 1.5kms distant). The Zone of Theoretical visibility (ZTV) in the ES shows the huge impact HS2 will have, from east of South Heath to across the Misbourne valley up to 2kms away. The ZTV does not stop at 2km because HS2 ceases to be visible, but because HS2 Ltd imposed an arbitrary limit of 2km. It also takes no account of the visibility of the highest elements of the railway (gantries etc).
 - b. Noise and light pollution emanating from trains speeding along cuttings and the noise boom on entering the green tunnel, disrupting the tranquillity experienced by residents both during the day and especially early in the morning and late at night. The green tunnel is too short to provide adequate protection to your Petitioners. The limits of deviation should not permit the line to be raised by up to 3 metres more, as this will worsen noise and light pollution.
 - c. Vibration from trains travelling through the green tunnel at 360km/hr. This may affect the nearer properties on Sibleys Rise. HS2 Ltd have not adopted the lower limits of exposure used for the Jubilee Line Extension.
 - d. Permanent change in character and loss of amenities footpaths in the adjacent Sibleys Coppice lose their character and will be subject to groundbourne vibration; the footpaths from Great Missenden to Potter Row become exposed to excessive noise; the one passing through Jenkins Wood is diverted to follow the trace; the footpaths in the Hyde end area are diverted and exposed to excessive noise; and the footpath to Little Missenden is permanently closed. In the construction period they are either diverted or the nearest ones, through Sibley's Coppice, are closed for 2 years. Of the 11 footpaths that currently cross the line in the area only 7 remain as footpaths. It will be difficult to take exercise, walk dogs, use the roads for cycling, and enjoy the countryside.
 - e. The loss of the amenity of the gymnasium on Frith Hill and pub/restaurant on the B485, both within walking distance, which will be demolished to make way for HS2.

- f. The permanent loss of the local ancient woodlands, hedgerows, natural habitats for wildlife, areas of green space, views and tranquil surroundings. The line will cause habitat severance. Land will be used as construction sites and for the erection of permanent buildings and an auto transformer substation to support the railway. Unsightly gantries, portals, cuttings, miles of metal security fencing (an eyesore as the few photo montages show (eg LV-01-040), the introduction of unnatural balancing ponds, and bunds will despoil the AONB.
- g. The permanent and temporary loss of agricultural land to the South Heath area, as a result of the wide area of land take required for the surface construction proposals, and to provide the proposed environmental mitigation.
- h. The creation of a permanent new 40 hectare land fill site within the AONB and nearby to South Heath at Hunts Green, with all the issues as to how the 2 million tonnes of spoil will be transported there, and the loss of this land for farming.
- i. Isolation of the village community from Great Missenden on which it depends during the construction period, when Frith Hill South Heath Leg (SHL) is shut for 18months to 2 years, and all the practicable routes will be clogged by construction traffic.
- j. Permanent damage to the viability of South Heath home based businesses, including SRRG members, that will not be able to withstand the lengthy construction period.
- k. Loss of businesses to Great Missenden, on which South Heath (that has no facilities of its own) depends, as many will not be able to withstand the sustained period of construction works affecting the area that will cause loss of trade.
- l. Extensive and damaging impacts construction works stretching over 7.75 years: safety risks, noise, dust and traffic congestion will be on our Petitioner's members' doorsteps:
 - i. Road safety risks: the nearby crossroads are a pick-up and drop-off point for several school buses, but the lanes have inadequate or no pavement. Equestrians, cyclists, children, elderly and other vulnerable users are particularly at risk;
 - ii. Noise (from both the road traffic and the works), which are likely to render the gardens of your Petitioner's members un-usable during the many years of the construction period, and may adversely affect the educational development of children trying to sleep in the evening and early morning;
 - iii. Inability to be able to use our recreational space with the swing because of the noise
 - iv. Dust blown on the prevailing south-westerly winds from the close proximity of construction spoil dumps (along the west side of the South Heath Green Tunnel) across the rest of South Heath and beyond. While the ES calls them "temporary" they will be there for many years. This will have health impacts, and affect the quality of life (usability of outside spaces, dust etc on exterior of homes).
 - v. Congestion and disruption from Frith Hill (SHL) and Kings Lane being a construction traffic route for many years. Besides the construction traffic, Kings Lane is expected to have to take the extra 1,900 vehicles diverted onto when Frith Hill (SHL). At the B485 Chesham Road end of Kings Lane there are also road realignment works that include building a new roundabout (with permanent lighting that is out of place in South Heath).
- m. Emergency services being unable to provide a timely response due to road congestion, closures, and diversions during the years of construction works, which jeopardises the

lives of your Petitioner's members and other South Heath residents. This is a particular concern to the elderly amongst SRRG.

- n. Anxiety and stress affecting your Petitioner's member's health and well-being from worry about property blight impacting on the value of their homes and their inability to sell them, both now, during the construction period, and thereafter due to the close proximity of the proposed line. This has been a substantial issue since March 2010.
- o. Pylon works in South Heath that involves the temporary re-siting of the power lines, and then their permanent re-instatement.
- p. Being impossible to find out what some key impacts of HS2 would be. Common responses from HS2 Ltd are that the details are not yet worked out, or the answers are in the ES. The latter sometimes proves false, and was 50,000 pages long. The ES is very indigestible; hard to follow; lacks sufficient visualisations; relies on highly technical appendices that omits key information eg from where the railway is visible (the ZTV excludes gantries, the horizontal and vertical profile of the railway was omitted as the profile maps were not released for the ES, and the height of bunds remains undisclosed).
- q. The potential acquisition of land and its use for development and regeneration (under clause 47 of the bill) which are unnecessary and will further increase blight. Your petitioner asks that they be removed from the Bill.

18 Your Petitioner requests that the following alteration be made to the Bill:

- That the AONB be protected from these effects by amending the Bill so the line passes throughout the AONB in a bored tunnel, as proposed by the Chiltern District Council or by extending the present Chiltern tunnel proposals by adopting the CRAG T2 proposals. The latter is referred to in the ES (CFA 9 Volume 2 para 2.6.8, page 40) and accepted as both feasible and environmentally preferable. Either of these options would substantially remove the adverse effects complained of in this petition and the need for the proposed remedies otherwise required.
- If Parliament declines to require a bored Chiltern Tunnel throughout the AONB, which is the primary alteration to the Bill your Petitioner seeks, your Petitioner requests that the bored Chiltern tunnel is extended (as in the REPA proposal) at minimum to Leather Lane as referred to in the ES (CFA 9, Volume 2, para 2.6.18, page 41/42) but extended to Leather Lane² It is engineeringly feasible and environmentally preferable and will address, most, but not all, of the concerns above. REPA contend that it is cost neutral and will not delay the project's completion.
- If even this is not granted by Parliament then numerous individual mitigations of the adverse impacts are necessary, all of which will cost time and money. Your Petitioner expands below on the individual adverse impacts that concern it and to which it objects, and the mitigation that would be required for each, if the bored tunnel proposals are rejected.
- Your petitioner also requests that measures be taken and changes be made in the Bill

² A Leather Lane end point was initially referred to in the Draft ES as option (d) CFA 9, Volume 2, para 2.6.5 page 28 and again in the ES (at para 2.6.5, option (d), page 39). Leather Lane is 400m further north than Liberty Lane, and REPA adopted this new Leather Lane end point for its proposal in April 2014 following receiving information from HS2 Ltd on its practicability.

and the Code of Construction Practice (or by obtaining binding undertakings from the Promoter) to address the various concerns of your Petitioner listed above.

Breakdown of mitigation required if your Petitioner's preferred tunnel solution is not adopted

19 Your Petitioner affirms that the 'green route' promoted by Chiltern District Council (amongst others) and the 'CRAG' bored tunnel option (outlined on pages 39 to 40 of Vol2, CFA9 of the Environmental Statement) are the only acceptable approaches to mitigate the impact on residents and the AONB. However if full tunnelling under the AONB is not accepted by Parliament, the 'REPA' tunnel that extends the bored tunnel to Leather Lane addresses most of South Heath's local issues, but not those in the AONB north of Leather Lane. If none of these three options for more extensive bored tunnelling is accepted then all the numerous individual items of mitigation will be required, as set out below.

20 Your Petitioner requests that provision is made for:

Addressing permanent issues

- a. The cuttings adjacent to each end of the South Heath Green Tunnel should be made deeper, and return to the levels originally proposed by the 2011 consultation, with continuous full height (5m) high specification sound barriers (both sides of the line to protect residents and footpaths) immediately adjacent to the track to reduce noise, and with bunds to conceal the line and the gantries where appropriate. Furthermore the South Heath Green Tunnel should be extended to provide better protection to residents and the footpaths out of Great Missenden to Potter Row, and to Hyde End.
- b. HS2 Ltd should adopt standards of noise exposure that in all cases meet World Health Organisation guidelines, but are set at a quieter level to maintain the tranquillity of the AONB. Exposure limits should apply to all properties and their gardens, and to footpaths, (with no rights of way routed alongside the railway, as is currently planned). Noise should be reduced to the lowest practicable level to minimise its impact on the AONB, its residents and visitors.
- c. Vibration and groundborne noise may be problem for the homes of your Petitioner's members nearest the track and for those using the footpaths over the green tunnel in Sibley's coppice. In the absence of a bored tunnel it is not clear how vibration from the green tunnel can be remedied, but your Petitioner understands that reduced speed and the uses of materials to adsorb vibration originating from the wheel/rail interface may be effective.
- d. That HS2 is placed in fully retained cuttings to reduce land take of gardens, ancient woodland and farmland. While no land is taken from your Petitioner's members, the enjoyment of the surrounding area is affected by such a wide land-take, and in so blighting the area this impacts on the value of your petitioner's member's properties.
- e. That the power for the contractor to raise the line by up to 3 metres is removed for the AONB section of the line, especially for the cuttings either side of the South Heath green tunnel where the line has already been raised from the alignment originally proposed.
- f. That provision is made for constructing green bridges across the line where they are established rights of way, in order to retain trees and shrubs and permit wild life access. This affects those to the north and south of the green tunnel.
- g. Compensatory planting commence at the earliest opportunity. Mature trees (able to

grow to at least forty feet high) should be planted over the South Heath green tunnel to emulate the previous character, and for screening new building eg portal buildings and autotransformer. Funding for maintaining the planting should be provided in perpetuity. Where planting is compensatory for loss of ancient woodland it should adopt the 30:1 ratio supported by the Woodland Trust and not 4:1 as currently proposed

- h. That the speed of the trains be reduced to 300km/hr as per the recommendation of the House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee Report - but permanently - in order to help reduce the environmental impact to your Petitioner's members and the AONB.
- i. That the line of route be reconsidered to exploit the greater curvature possible with a 300km/hr maximum line speed, compared to the current 400k/hr. This should then allow the routing to be within existing transport corridors (rather than more than 1.5kms distant from the nearest (and quite minor) "A" road).
- j. That arrangements be made for the spoil to be removed from the area by rail or pipeline. Your Petitioner points out that, if any one of the three tunnel proposals your Petitioner has raised are adopted, then the amount of spoil generated in the AONB will be very substantially reduced and there would be no requirement for a land fill site at Hunts Green.
- k. That in relation to the balancing ponds and other water management measures, that alternative techniques are considered in consultation with the local authority, and that if necessary waste water is tanked and then removed for sustainable disposal
- l. That property blight (when the railway is operational) is compensated by extending the compensation available under the Land Compensation Act 1973 to cover all losses not just those relating to nuisance. The blight in the construction period (and in the 17 years from 2010 until one year after operations in 2027) is discussed in para 19 below
- m. That all ancillary structures (eg transformer stations, portal buildings) be of such a design to blend into the environment and be suitably screened from residents, visitors and walkers. Security fencing should be sympathetically designed to blend-into the landscape.
- n. That the pylons are removed and the power lines are reinstated underground, (as proposed for other parts of the line) rather than moved and then re-instated on the surface, as proposed
- o. That a substantial Community Fund be established to pay for creating local facilities (replacing those lost) and financial support be available to maintain and re-establish retailing and other services in Great Missenden.

Addressing construction issues

- 21 Your Petitioner requests that the Nominated Undertaker be required to mitigate the construction issues, by giving the Code of Construction Practice legal effect, with independent assessment of compliance and punitive sanctions for breach. The Code should specify the need for all work, facilities and construction, to be to the best available standards and techniques, so that the highest technically achievable levels of environmental protection

are implemented for the construction and operation of HS2. Mitigations should include:-

- a. Properties in the South Heath area, including your Petitioner's members, are significantly blighted from the prospect of HS2, and this is likely to worsen when construction is underway. To address this:
 - i. The proposed 'need to sell' scheme should be amended to cover anyone wishing to sell their property if it is blighted - irrespective of financial status; or
 - ii. Alternatively, the property bond as proposed by HS2 Action Alliance should be implemented;
 - iii. All those remaining who suffer the impacts of construction should be compensated, including tenants of social housing.

Under the current proposals some of those with properties backing onto HS2 will qualify for the voluntary purchase scheme, while their neighbours, who are in reality equally blighted do not. Everyone whose property is blighted should be entitled to compensation.

- b. Construction noise and vibration – lasts for years in total and so it should not be allowed higher noise limits than for HS2's operation, which should itself reflect WHO guidelines and the need to preserve the tranquillity of the AONB. Noise exposure should be monitored and enforced by the Local Authority who should have powers to stop work if limits are exceeded.
- c. Constructing new temporary roads to access the trace directly from the A413, and prohibiting the use of all existing minor roads in the AONB to be used by construction traffic eg Potter Row, Kings Lane, Hyde Heath Road, Hyde Lane and Frith Hill (South Heath Leg). In addition:
 - i. Prohibiting HGV movements outside the period 09:30 – 15:30 throughout this section of the AONB (eg on the A413 and B485).
 - ii. Prohibiting HGV movements along school routes between 15:00 and 15:30.
 - iii. Excess spoil that is removed along the trace to not interfere with the traffic on public roads that bisect the trace (that are themselves currently specified as construction routes eg the B485, Frith Hill (South Heath Leg)) by using traffic management, but have a grade separated junction (to either have construction traffic go over or under the road).
 - iv. Constructing a temporary bridge for Frith Hill (South Heath Leg) to avoid its lengthy planned closure and isolating your Petitioner's members who use this route daily
- d. Prohibiting any widening, straightening or enlargement of the narrow minor lanes for construction traffic.
- e. Operating a 'Park and Ride' scheme to transport construction workers along the trace, and supporting this by not providing parking for contractors at the construction compounds.
- f. Dust exposure limits to be specified, monitored and enforced by local authorities (funded by the promoter), with powers to stop works if exceeded. Special attention to be paid to the spoil heaps and impacts of westerly winds effecting South Heath
- g. That contractors in the AONB be required to restore the land and temporary access

roads after use to acceptable AONB landscaping and that local authorities be given the power to inspect such works and if necessary sanction contractors

- h. The Nominated Undertaker must be responsible for maintaining the quality of all roads used during and after construction, so that the roads are returned to their original size and character, and all damage repaired.
- i. That the Promoter provides an air ambulance with crew on standby during working hours, to ensure that medical emergencies receive a prompt response.
- j. A hotline should be set up allowing road users to report any damage to the road, their property, or other related matters, and the highway authority should have access to all reports, to ensure these are addressed and remedied in a reasonable length of time.

Reservation of rights to raise further issues

- 22 The points made above are in relation to the Bill as published for 2nd Reading and are without prejudice to your Petitioner's right to petition further and separately in relation to any additional provisions introduced to that Bill in future. Further your Petitioner has had great difficulty understanding the Bill, including its Schedules, alongside the Deposited Plans and Sections and the ES, which is deficient and in error in various ways. Your Petitioner is concerned that it may have missed a material point that it would wish to address the Select Committee on. Your Petitioner also wishes the ES to be corrected and then be permitted to raise further issues of concern on those matters which are corrected, or on which additional information is provided, eg road congestion, visual intrusiveness, waste management and noise. The points made above are without prejudice to any such further points.

Conclusion

- 23 Your Petitioner supports the petitions for a longer bored Chiltern Tunnel that extends throughout the AONB. Such tunnels are being petitioned by the Chiltern District Council, Chiltern Ridges Action Group (CRAG). If neither is accepted by parliament your Petitioner supports the extended tunnel proposed by the Residents' Environmental Protection Association (REPA). The CRAG and REPA tunnels are described in the ES Volume 2 CFA9 at pages 39-42 (albeit that the REPA proposal is now slightly extended to Leather Lane.
- 24 If Parliament agrees a fully bored tunnel throughout the AONB then this addresses your Petitioner's concerns with the exception of those concerning unsuitable ancillary structures (eg vents) and effective compensation (albeit that far fewer people would be affected). If Parliament only agree the extended bored tunnel (proposed by REPA) additional mitigations will be required north of the new north portal at Leather Lane.
- 25 For the foregoing and connected reasons your Petitioner respectfully submits that unless the Bill is amended as proposed above, so far affecting your petitioner's members, should not be allowed to pass into Law
- 26 There are other clauses and provisions of the Bill which, if passed into law as they now stand will prejudicially affect your Petitioner's members, their rights, interests and property, and your Petitioner's area, and for which no adequate provision is made to protect them.

YOUR PETITIONER therefore humbly prays 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.

Signe

Name



Chair of Sibleys Rise Residents' Group

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(LONDON-WEST MIDLANDS)
BILL