

01IN 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 ST PANCRAS PARISH CHURCH PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

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 are St Pancras Parish Church Parochial Church Council in the London Borough of Camden, in Euston Road NW1 2BA. The church has existed on this site since 1822, and is the parish church of the Ancient Parish of St Pancras. The parish stretches up either side of Euston station in the north to Cardington Street, Doric Way and Phoenix Way, down to Torrington and Tavistock Places in the south, Judd and Ossulston Streets in the east and Tottenham Court and Hampstead Roads in the West. The north of the parish has high indices of deprivation, with moderate deprivation and a high student population further south. Your Petitioners are a member of the HS2 Action Group and support the petition being deposited by that organisation. This response expresses concerns from the PCC for our parishioners, and also heritage issues. St Pancras church is a grade 1 listed neoclassical Georgian building of immense value to the history of London. In St James Gardens in which there are still at least 35,000 people buried who will need reburial, and a number of listed monuments.
8. Your Petitioners and the rights, interests and property of the parishioners are injuriously affected by the Bill, to which your Petitioners object for reasons amongst others, hereinafter appearing.
9. St James Gardens is in our parish and is part of the ancient parish of St Pancras, being purchased from St James Piccadilly in the nineteenth century in common with many of the disused burial grounds in metropolitan London from 1855. Responsibility for the souls buried there, many of them famous, passed to our benefice. All these gardens provide an amenity to the local parishes in what are often overcrowded estates. For this amenity to be removed for the duration of the childhoods of our parishioners is not acceptable and your Petitioners ask that adequate alternative provision be provided during construction and subsequently. The loss of over 17 mature trees affects the green lung such spaces provide in the inner city. Your Petitioners ask that these be replaced, and by trees that will not affect the allergies of parishioners and the thousands of commuters as much as the

London plane trees. We suggest birches be considered as they have been demonstrated to tackle pollution effectively, but there are many possibilities.

10. The church building is unique and important to the heritage of London, as are several of the monuments in St James Gardens, as recognised by English Heritage listings. The impact of pollution and vibration on the Church building from the increased traffic due to construction will be serious. Your petitioners ask for funding to restore and renovate the erosion caused. To protect the church as well as the parishioners your petitioners ask that you direct HS2 to monitor the impact on the ecology, minimise the length of the disruption, bar HS2 from using residential roads, divert additional traffic away from the parish (though not to the detriment of other parishes), provide additional noise and visual mitigation and minimise the land take.
11. Our area is badly treated in the HS2 proposals, both property and community and the country will receive poor value for money from the HS2 proposals. The proposals in the ES make Euston a worse station than it is today, the opportunity should be seized to provide a splendid public building to enhance London. Proper time to plan this could be secured by focusing on a pro tem terminus at Old Oak. Euston could then be closed for a rapid rebuild rather than the dreadful proposition of night work 7 days a week for 10 years. As well as the restoration of the Doric Arch, we are very concerned as to the architecture proposed for the Hampstead Bridge, which will dominate the area and overlook parishioner's homes.
12. HS2 needs to undertake further serious investigation of alternative track layouts that could avoid demolition of bridges, as this could reduce the amount of construction significantly. Tunnelling must be costed and worked through as a serious alternative, just as it has for rural areas. Double Deck Down Two uses a smaller footprint and thereby avoids the destruction of homes in the parish and across the Hampstead Road. The link to HS1 could be by tunnel rather than overground and rebuilding the North London Line bridges. Lowering the track rather than raising the bridges needs to be properly costed.
13. Your Petitioners wish to see at least the following mitigations that will protect some of the rights, property and interests of parishioners to mitigate against the combined and cumulative effects of danger to children and vulnerable people, of noise, vibration, pollution, traffic congestion, visual intrusion, road and bridge closures and night time working for a ten year period. They will bear the brunt of a decade of construction in the national interest, under the current proposals without equitable compensation. Their right to the quiet enjoyment of life in their homes and their quality of life will be destroyed from 2016-2026 followed by the development exploitation of the area 2026-2034.

14. That compensation is equitable for people in urban areas who should be compensated for the cumulative impact of ten years of heavy construction which is far more than a "temporary disruption". People whose homes will be demolished or rendered uninhabitable by the noise and pollution of demolition and construction must be rehoused in an equitable and timely manner. That the value of the property is protected, for instance by a property bond. As well as compensation for property blight, there needs to be compensation for the impact on the businesses and livelihoods of parishioners, for instance in Drummond Street.
15. That individual household mitigation funds be provided so that people can decide when the noise and dirt become intolerable, and they need a break away in a nearby hotel to get some sleep and peace for a few weeks for a child studying for GCSEs or an elderly relative in the summer stifling with windows closed. Double glazing is not enough to save parishioners from the "temporary" disturbance of ten years of constant heavy construction immediately adjacent to their homes, followed by a further eight years of development over the station and tracks from Euston to Parkway.
16. Use of rail rather than road to move spoil and machinery throughout the borough to minimise pollution and congestion on Camden roads. Pollution already exceeds the European thresholds and impacts on the health of parishioners, both in terms of well-being and of life expectancy. Construction traffic should be limited to 5 miles per hour, daytime only and kept out of residential streets so parishioners have safe local access to amenities. Local trees to be replaced, ideally with birches and limes rather than the ubiquitous hayfever inducing London plane trees in the event that our trees are cut down to facilitate construction.
17. That parishioners be given a day a week of respite from all construction. It is unreasonable for people to have to endure relentless construction noise and pollution every day for ten years. Every Sunday there should be the opportunity for peace and quiet, for study and to enjoy family life. If Sunday is not possible, another day needs to be agreed in advance. Any breach of this, of core working hours, of pollution and noise thresholds should result in fines that HS2 must pay into a Local Community Benefit Fund. Through this mechanism your Petitioners want the HS2 planning schedules to consider the local community as well as their own convenience. There should be recognition in the documentation of the special nature of construction in the heart of a big city.

18. 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.

19. 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 DOROTHEA JOY HACKMAN

On behalf of St Pancras Parish Church Parochial Church Council

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Against the Bill – On Merits – By Counsel &c

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