

IN PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
SESSION 2015–16

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL (ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS)

Against – on Merits – [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 RT HON JEREMY WRIGHT QC MP

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.
- 3 A paper of amendment of provisions (“AP2”) was published on 13th July 2015 making provision, amongst other matters, for the acquisition of additional land in your Petitioners’ area and the alteration of and addition to the works proposed under the Bill. AP2 was accompanied by a Supplementary Environmental Statement (“the SES”).
- 4 Your Petitioner is the Member of Parliament for Kenilworth and Southam (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Petitioner’) and has a constituency office located within the area that will be affected by the Bill. Your Petitioner holds regular surgeries which draw individuals from across Kenilworth and Southam to access the assistance and intervention of their elected

Member of Parliament. Your Petitioner is injuriously affected by the scheduled works as the traffic congestion and road closures during the construction of the proposed train line in Kenilworth and Southam will hinder your Petitioner in meeting his commitments when he travels around his constituency; access will be difficult when crossing the constituency with delays as a result of diversions and closures. A number of your Petitioner's constituents are businesses and persons who work and live in properties which will be compulsorily acquired, or if not being compulsorily acquired, are located within close proximity of the high speed railway and associated construction sites and will therefore be injuriously affected by the works authorised by the Bill. Significantly your Petitioner represents the views of the residents and businesses that are affected by the Bill and in particular those residents who are not able to petition themselves. Your Petitioner respectfully requests that he be heard by the Select Committee which considers the Bill, both as a private citizen and as a Member of Parliament representing the views of his constituents.

INTRODUCTION

- 5 Your Petitioner welcomes the changes to the scheme that arise out of AP2 but believes that more could be done to alleviate the damage caused by HS2 to the communities along the proposed line in Kenilworth and Southam. Your Petitioner refers in particular to the height of the line through CFAs 18, 17 and 16 and is not convinced that the correct balance has been struck between protecting the environment, residents and other affected parties and ensuring that the money spent on mitigation is cost effective. Your Petitioner remains convinced the alignment should be lowered in order to safeguard the social, environmental and economic cohesion of communities through which HS2 passes. As your Petitioner has set out on previous occasions, in writing and orally before the select committee of your honourable House, HS2 will seriously reduce the ability of residents living close to the line to enjoy the lifestyle they have chosen in the predominantly rural constituency of Kenilworth and Southam. Whilst your Petitioner has been advised the current alignment has been developed through a process of iterative design developments your Petitioner believes there has been insufficient constructive consultation and engagement with the local communities (and individual constituents) affected by HS2. Despite the select committee of your honourable House recognising special cases/scenarios your Petitioner remains as concerned as ever that these special cases have not been addressed sufficiently by the Promoter in AP2, which includes the village of Burton Green.

CFA 18 – BURTON GREEN

- 6 Your Petitioner welcomes the changes to the scheme in Burton Green, including measures to minimise the impact of the project on the Kenilworth Greenway and the proposals to lengthen and lower the green tunnel. However your Petitioner still believes the village will be seriously affected by the construction of and the subsequent operation of the line. The scheme has already had a significant impact on the village in terms of a deterioration in the health and wellbeing of some of the inhabitants who live in close proximity to the line and a significant number of residents are seeking to leave the village if they have not done so already.
- 7 Following the Promoter's rejection of the proposals for a deep bored tunnel, which your Petitioner maintains is the most sensible solution to safeguard the future of Burton Green, your Petitioner recognises the positive impact the changes proposed in AP2 will bring to the village but is of the view that much more needs to be done to compensate those affected for their losses. Your Petitioner is aware of and supports his constituent Petitioners in their request for the cut and cover tunnel to be further extended by 100 metres to the north and 400-500 metres to the south to protect the businesses and residents who are now located closer to the new tunnel portals as a result of AP2.
- 8 Your Petitioner notes the new site on Red Lane for the relocation and rebuilding of the Burton Green Village Hall and welcomes the phasing of the works to allow for the replacement hall to be built and made available for use ahead of the demolition of the existing facility. Your Petitioner is pleased the new facility will be constructed using modern technologies so that it will be fully sustainable in the long term. Your Petitioner also welcomes the freeing up of the site originally identified on Hob Lane so that it can be made available to the Primary School.
- 9 Your Petitioner welcomes the changes to construction traffic routes and especially the avoidance of Hob Lane. Your Petitioner is hopeful this change will allay fears for the safety of children travelling to school (along a construction route) and help secure the long term future of the primary school amid fears it would become isolated as a direct consequence of the construction route.
- 10 Your Petitioner continues to harbour concerns about the future economic viability of the primary school as families leave the area and parents withdraw their children from the school due to concerns about the effects of construction, and encourages the Promoter to continue

their engagement with the school (as discussed by the select committee of your honourable House) on mitigating the effects of the scheme on the school. It is vital this community resource is safeguarded.

- 11 Your Petitioner welcomes the provision for additional permanent screening of the auto-transformer feeder station if it cannot be relocated further away from the village and would ask the Promoter to ensure every effort is made to guarantee that lighting and the building design is sympathetic to the location. Your Petitioner is concerned about the blight inflicted on the residential properties closest to the station on Hodgetts Lane who have, until now, enjoyed living in a quiet rural location.

COMPENSATION

- 12 The select committee of your honourable House recognised that Burton Green is a special case but your Petitioner is concerned that this special case has not been addressed sufficiently by the Promoter in AP2. The proposals could do more to address the blight that is causing property values to decline. The AP2 Environmental Statement shows that significant operating noise will remain for many residents and users of the Greenway for example and noise maps based on averaging may not accurately convey the full impact of peak noise levels. Your Petitioner is aware that other petitioners in Burton Green have requested the Promoter further improves noise mitigation throughout the Parish and that the Community be offered a comprehensive demonstration in-situ, which your Petitioner supports.
- 13 Some residents are unable to sell their homes as a direct result of the scheme and those that can sell at a much reduced price. The proposals set out in AP2 will not resolve this situation. As your Petitioner has already set out in many forums, including in the select committee of your honourable House, a more flexible approach to compensation is required with sensible and logical boundaries separating the different compensation zones rather than arbitrary straight lines. Owner occupiers should be able to sell their properties at a time of their own choosing without the need to demonstrate the effect of HS2 where it has already been demonstrated that a particular area is blighted by the proposed line.
- 14 Your Petitioner believes every effort must be made to encourage residents to remain within the village and urges the Promoter once again to adopt a more flexible approach when

considering individual compensation cases. Your Petitioner noted the wish of the select committee of your honourable House to be advised by the Promoter on the operation of the Need to Sell scheme and hopes the Promoter will report on its' operation shortly, if it has not done so already. Your Petitioner is keen to know that those who are deserving of compensation as discussed by the select committee of your honourable House are indeed being properly compensated and that the Need to Sell scheme has demonstrated flexibility in its eight months of operation.

CFA 17 – OFFCHURCH AND CUBBINGTON

- 15 Your Petitioner welcomes the provision of a new cycle and pedestrian bridge over Fosse Way in Offchurch providing a safe crossing. The Promoter has not provided information about the width of the bridge only the length and hopes this is a simple omission. Your Petitioner requests that a similar design for the bridge be implemented as is currently in use for the Kenilworth Cycle Bridge on the Coventry Road. Members of the select committee of your honourable House will recall visiting this bridge during their visit in October 2014. Your Petitioner also requests the sensitive treatment of public rights of way for the future enjoyment of the community. For example, footpath W192 on the eastern side of the line does not connect to any other routes at the moment. A reinstatement of the connection previously moved in the original design would allow users to access that footpath when using the bridge.

CFA 16 – LADBROKE AND SOUTHAM

- 16 Your Petitioner welcomes the provision of a new shared use cycleway/footpath alongside the realigned A423 Banbury Road but is concerned the two metre width as proposed is too narrow. The original proposal for the footpath was 1.5 metres wide so the extra 0.5 metres to accommodate cyclists is marginal. Whilst it is understood the facility will not be in constant use your Petitioner is concerned that during busy periods cyclists (or pedestrians) may be forced onto the A423 to avoid collision putting themselves at risk of harm from passing vehicles on a very busy road. Your Petitioner would ask the Promoter to consider widening the shared path further. At the same time, your Petitioner would also ask the Promoter to consider footpath SM83 which will be redundant as a result of this new shared use cycleway/footpath.

17 Your Petitioner welcomes the proposal to permanently realign the Warwick Road and Banbury Road in Wormleighton but is concerned by the lack of detailed design available to date. As an ecological corridor your Petitioner seeks assurance and clarification from the Promoter that Sadie Morgan and her design panel will ensure iconic and leading edge design in conjunction with the local community.

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 he may be heard by his 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 his constituents 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:

BACKSHEET:

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