



Extraordinary General Meeting

**10.00 a.m. 25th April 2014
The Lodge, 90 Station Road,
Chinnor, OX39 4HA**

Agenda

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| 1. | Apologies | 10.00 |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | 10.01 |
| 3. | Public Question Time | 10.02 - 10.03 |
| 4. | High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill resolution | 10.03 - 10.10 |

Item 4

High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill resolution

Author: Steve Rodrick – Chief Officer
Colin White – Planning Officer

Summary: The Board has previously opposed the proposed High Speed rail link between London and the West Midlands. The Board is required to formally resolve whether it wishes to submit a petition in connection with the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill and this is sought.

Purpose of Report: To provide information to enable the Board to pass a formal resolution to oppose the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill in Parliament, including depositing a petition in either or both Houses and appearing before either or both the Select Committees which will consider the Bill.

High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill

1. The Board is aware that the proposed HS2 project is now being progressed through a Parliamentary process. The hybrid Bill for Phase 1 (London – West Midlands) was deposited and given a formal first reading in the House of Commons on 25th November 2013. The second reading of the Bill will take place on 28th April 2014.
2. Once the second reading of Bill has taken place, the principle of the Bill cannot be challenged, however, petitions can be submitted to argue for changes to the scheme design. A significant number of individuals, groups and organisations are opposed to the scheme and are likely, therefore, to oppose the Bill and will wish to submit petitions in order to recommend changes which reduce the likely negative impacts of the scheme.
3. Petitioning is set to start the day after the second reading finishes, and there will be two separate deadlines for petitions to be submitted. The first deadline is likely to be the 16th May 2014, and will be for local authorities (excluding Parish Councils) and businesses. The second deadline is likely to be the 23rd May 2014, and will be for all other petitioners. It is considered that the Board will be required to submit any petition by the first date.
4. The Board is aware of the likely connotations of HS2 for the Chilterns AONB and the fact that the Board has resolved previously to submit a petition opposing the Bill. However, in order to be able to submit a petition a formal resolution must be taken by the Board following the appearance of an appropriate public notice in a local paper.

5. A notice was placed in the Bucks Free Press on 4th April that announced, in accordance with section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972, an extraordinary meeting of the Chilterns Conservation Board would be held on the 25th April at 10.00 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is, if it is deemed expedient to oppose the hybrid Bill, to pass resolutions that are considered to be necessary in connection with the opposition to the hybrid Bill.
6. In accordance with Clause 32 of Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1778 'The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Establishment of Conservation Board) Order 2004', Section 239 of the 1972 Act shall have effect in relation to the Board as if the Board were a local authority for the purposes of that Act. Section 239(1) provides that "where a local authority ... are satisfied that it is expedient to oppose, any local or personal Bill in Parliament" it has the power to oppose it. The Board may therefore oppose the hybrid Bill.
7. Based on the Board's previous consideration of the likely impacts on the Chilterns AONB of the proposed high speed rail link between London and the West Midlands it is considered that, in order to fulfil its duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB, the Board should oppose the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill and that it should therefore submit a petition to this effect.
8. The key points of the Board's petition should relate to the likely detrimental impacts on the Chilterns AONB as follows (not an exhaustive list):
 - Landscape impacts and visual intrusion;
 - Deposition of spoil;
 - Impacts of structures and other infrastructure (viaducts, cuttings, embankments, cut and cover tunnels, bridges, overhead line equipment, telecom masts for example);
 - Design of structures;
 - Noise, light, pollution and impacts on tranquillity;
 - Severance of land (farming, rights of way and ecological networks);
 - Woodland (particularly Ancient Woodland) and other ecological impacts;
 - Loss of amenity and reputation and socio-economic impacts, and
 - Heritage impacts.
9. The key mitigation measure would be a fully bored tunnel under the Chilterns AONB and this would be the focus of the petition. The Board should also include within its petition further requests that would be designed to reduce the damaging impacts on the designated landscape, should a fully bored tunnel not be accepted.
10. If the Board agrees with this recommendation, then the Board would have to name individuals (and their positions) who would take all necessary steps to bring about the preparation and delivery of any

petition. It is proposed that the preparation of the petition should be undertaken by the Chief Officer and relevant staff in conjunction with the Chairman and relevant Board Members, and that any petition should be submitted to Alastair Lewis (Parliamentary Agent at Sharpe Pritchard) for delivery to the House of Commons.

11. It is proposed that the Board should also confirm that Alastair Lewis (Parliamentary Agent at Sharpe Pritchard) should be authorised to sign the Board's petition opposing the Bill. When the Bill is delivered to the House of Commons a fee of £20 is payable.
12. The Board will continue to engage with HS2 Ltd. and to negotiate on key petitioning points.

Recommendations

1. **To pass a resolution that in the judgement of the Chilterns Conservation Board it is expedient for the Board to oppose the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill deposited in the Session of Parliament 2013-14.**
2. **To pass a resolution that the Chairman, the Chief Officer and relevant Board Members and staff, take all necessary steps to carry the foregoing resolution into effect and that confirmation be given that Alastair Lewis at Sharpe Pritchard (Parliamentary Agents) be authorised to sign the Petition of the Board against the Bill.**