

Petition 1804 Calvert Green Parish Council and Petition 1111 Charndon Parish Council

Summary

The purpose of our joint petition is to offer solutions to the overwhelming cumulative impact on parishioners of the extensive and deleterious changes to our countryside and way of life that the construction and operation of HS2 will have on our parishioners.

Our Parishes, part of Community Forum 13, are located in a quiet rural setting with most properties within a one mile radius of the proposed route. In Calvert no property is more than 160m from the line.

The Parish of Charndon is close to the actual line of the railway but is not impacted by Scheduled Works that appear in Schedule 1 of the Bill. These fall within the Parish of Steeple Claydon, but affect Calvert most severely. The parish boundary is deemed to be in the middle of the road in Brackley Lane, on the west side, with Steeple Claydon Parish boundary beginning from the centre eastwards. Calvert Green Parish begins at the south end of Brackley Lane and includes the line. As a rough estimate, Charndon Parish is therefore approximately 117m from the line.

The residents of both Parishes rely on the large village of Steeple Claydon with its GP surgery, dentist, bakery, newsagent and Co-op, and Buckingham and Bicester some seven miles away.

The CPRE has classified this as one of the rare areas in the UK with a dark night sky.

Charndon is an ancient village, mentioned in the Domesday Book, originally built along what is now Main Street en route to Marsh Gibbon and Bicester, and to Twyford in the west.

What is now the small hamlet of Calvert was formed circa 1900 to provide homes for the workers at the new brick works. All that remains now is Werner Terrace, comprising 19 properties, built around 1904 and Brackley Lane with its later terraced and semi-detached buildings. The new village of Calvert Green is built on the old brickworks site.

With The Great Central Railway link line from Nottingham to Quainton, completed in 1899, on the doorstep providing goods transport, Calvert became a thriving community. (The GCR was to have cost £3m but in the event it cost £12m.) In 1898 Calvert station was built, nothing of which remains but the platforms, and the only trains that now run on the track are the waste trains servicing the landfill site.

The site has become a valuable local wildlife site (LWS) forming part of the important ecology route that starts at Sheephouse Wood, continues to Decoypond Wood, to a further two pieces of woodland, and culminates at the Jubilee Nature reserve. All the aforementioned woods are on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Register. Sheephouse is a SSSI.

The line is to be reopened as the East/West rail spur from Aylesbury, running past Quainton down a narrow cutting with ancient woodland to the east, and the new Energy from Waste plant and landfill site to the west, to Calvert where it will join with the main East/West line coming from Bicester from the west to Bletchley in the East. It is proposed that HS2 shares this route, and that the current waste transfer siding be moved from the west side of the line to the east, on to what is now the Calvert Railway LWS at Calvert. This means that not only is it on the opposite side to the landfill/EfW site, but almost two kilometres away from the EfW plant. A high overbridge and road

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is to be constructed to enable FCC's offloading trucks to reach the siding, cutting through an ancient wood. It is also proposed to put a satellite depot and a materials stockpile on the LWS employing around 190 staff for a duration of almost eight years.

On the east side of the Calvert railway bridge is farmland, on which it is proposed to deposit up to two million tons of excavated spoil.

One kilometre to the north is the vast Infrastructure Maintenance Depot, separated from us by Jubilee Nature Reserve, a haven for many rare species, including bittern, turtle dove, and hairstreak butterfly.

The Promoter has safeguarded the new access road to the FCC EfW plant and landfill from the A41 right through to the Brackley Lane exit – through which no HGVs are permitted. Brackley Lane and the track behind Werner Terrace (accessed via Brackley Lane) are also safeguarded. We are concerned at the implications of this, and residents fear it will become a construction route. We are concerned for the safety of children getting on and off the school buses as the bus shelter and a bus stop are both situated on the junction of Brackley Lane and School Hill.

The promoter has planned to construct a pumping station, accessed from Brackley Lane, to service balancing ponds on the far side of the track. This will involve cutting down a screen of trees that would otherwise mask the view of the railway for affected residents. We cannot see how this can be a preferred option, when there is already a track on the pond side that serves an existing mobile phone mast.

In addition, the playing field is directly behind the homes and the children cross the track from their back gardens to play in the field. Parents are naturally worried about their safety if the Promoter is to take up the safeguarding option. Residents of both Werner Terrace and Brackley Lane park and garage their vehicles and again there are concerns as to how they will be able to enter and leave. Parking in front of Werner Terrace and Brackley Lane is already at its limit, posing a further traffic problem.

The cumulative impact, physical and emotional, because of all of these impositions is something that the Promoter has not fully addressed, preferring to restrict themselves to the impact of the trains and the line per se.

The purpose of our petition is to identify each of these impacts, and offer a solution to each.

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