MINUTES OF ORAL EVIDENCE
taken before the
HIGH SPEED RAIL BILL COMMITTEE
on the
HIGH SPEED RAIL (WEST MIDLANDS – CREWE) BILL

Tuesday 7 May 2019 (Afternoon)

In Committee Room 5

PRESENT:
James Duddridge (Chair)
Sandy Martin
Mrs Sheryll Murray
Bill Wiggin

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IN ATTENDANCE:
Timothy Mould QC, Lead Counsel, Department for Transport

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WITNESSES:
Trevor Parkin and Gordon Wilkinson

Ms Brenda Morris-Goostrey

Mr Richard Bloor and Mrs Michelle Bloor

IN PUBLIC SESSION
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(At 4.02 p.m.)

1. THE CHAIR: First order of business is the petitioner, Stone Town Council.

   Stone Town Council

   Submissions by Mr Trevor Parkin

2. MR PARKIN: Good afternoon, ready for me to start?

3. THE CHAIR: Over to you.

4. MR PARKIN: Thank you very much. Good afternoon everybody, Committee. I just want to say that we’ve returned this afternoon to give evidence on AP2 because we don’t believe that HS2’s given appropriate consideration to the concerns of the people of Stone, particularly regarding road safety. We think this could have been avoided to a significant extent had the recommendation of yourselves, the Select Committee, in your Second Special Report, in paragraph (d) of the Second Special Report, which required the extension of the membership of the planning forum to include all parish councils representing local residents that were going to be affected. That’s R401(6), if I can call that up.

5. THE CHAIR: You may find it useful to just note that there was a bit of an issue with Wi-Fi, so things might take a little bit longer to come up onto screen than we’re familiar with. So we will exercise an even greater degree of patience than we normally have. Can you give us the reference again?

6. MR PARKIN: R401(6).

7. THE CHAIR: Excellent.

8. MR PARKIN: So, you should have the next page?

9. THE CHAIR: Are you able to carry on without the visual aid, or is it essential? It was a report and it was what we said. Thank you. You can carry on.

10. MR PARKIN: You basically requested that HS2 include the parish councils in discussions regarding road junctions in their area. If I can call on R402(5), which was the promoter’s response to that point and, if it doesn’t come up, I’ll basically say that
HS2’s response was they’ve offered an annual meeting with parish councils on general matters. We’ve heard nothing since your Special Report last year, after 16 July, until this week, and an annual general meeting has been offered which won’t deal with specific issues and that’s going to be held on 6 June. We consider this position to be unreasonable and not in the spirit of the recommendation which was made by the Committee and my colleague, Gordon Wilkinson, will be explaining why this is very important to the people of Stone, particularly in relation to two significant road junctions in our area, the A34/A51 junction, and the A34 Yarnfield Lane junction.

11. Sir, if I can, I think you can see there, it’s actually come up now, hasn’t it? So, they’ve offered, it says, I think halfway down paragraph 9, ‘It is likely that the parish councils will find regularly attending a meeting which would not address, that did address site specific issues, to be unproductive’. And they go on to offer these annual meetings in paragraph 10. That is not sufficient, and the junction works or proposals that have been made by HS2, are not considered at all appropriate by Stone Town Council in consideration of the safety of our road users.

12. So, if I can hand over at this point to my colleague, Mr Wilkinson.

Submissions by Mr Gordon Wilkinson

13. MR WILKINSON: Yes, good afternoon. Can I have slide P1396(5) please? Yes, first of all, I’m going to deal with the Stone bypass, A34 Stafford Road junction, which is subject to a HS2 modification. The existing roundabout shown there by HS2 actually has been modified recently through a development of Walton Hill, that’s a development of 500 houses to the north of Stone junction here. So, the actual existing roundabout does not look like that. I’ll get onto that a little bit later as to what it looks like. But just to, sort of, relate a few things. The A34 here runs north to south, to the north leads to Stone and Stoke, to the south to Stafford, A51 off to Cannock and can connect to Uttoxeter. Of equal interest though is the road on the left there, which is Broons Road, which is the access to Stone Business Park. This left arm has a large development of industrial units, which recently had the addition of Jaguar Land Rover Distribution Transfer, which has about 6,000 vehicles stored and is moved out throughout the day.

14. It is also the headquarters of VO Clubstore which you may not have heard of, but it’s a cycling retail come training centre, come clubhouse, for cyclists, and it caters for
cyclists from all over the north of Staffs and central area of Staffordshire. It provides club outings, runs on a Saturday and Sunday morning, and in the finer weather, and through the winter sometimes, Tuesday and Thursday evening runs as well. So quite a lot of cycle activity coming out of that junction. Can I have slide 464(2), please?

15. MR MARTIN: Chair, while we are waiting, can I ask, is there any particular route at present for the cyclists to get across that roundabout?

16. MR WILKINSON: No, I'll come to that, but there is no designated route.

17. MR MARTIN: So, the roundabout was there before the cyclists were?

18. MR WILKINSON: Well, it depends what you call which cyclists. It was probably there before VO Cycling was there, yes.

19. MR MARTIN: Yes, thank you.

20. MR WILKINSON: Okay, the only designated pedestrian route across the roundabout is on the A51 arm and this really provides access to and from the Cherryfields Stone Estate, housing estate, to the north of the junction to gain access to Aston Village Hall, which is located about 200 metres to the south of the island, so that’s the only facility provided across the whole four arms of the roundabout, just on this eastern edge of the roundabout, with a tucked-up pavement.

21. Okay, if you can go back to the previous, 1396(5) again? So, as I said, the existing roundabout is not like that anymore; it has a two-lane approach still on the A51, but it now flares out to four lanes, which can be seen on the modified version which HS2 have incorporated. It now has three circulatory lanes, two of which are for the heavy right turn-off the A51 towards Stone, and the straight on into Broons. And there is a left lane which you can’t quite see there which then accommodates the traffic travelling south to Stafford. The proposal by HS2 is to provide a dedicated segregated left turn lane here to accommodate the additional HGV traffic that’s been diverted from Beaconside and now carries on towards junction 14, via the A51 and the A34 South.

22. Can I have 1396(9) please? You’ll notice that on there, you can just about see it, there is on the A51 arm, there is a provisional uncontrolled access across that segregated physical lane.
23. THE CHAIR: You’re demonstrating what’s there, you’re demonstrating what HS2 want to be there, but what I’m keen to hear is what you want.

MR WILKINSON: Okay, I’m getting there, is the model an assessment of the new junction? And, in particular the A51, the provision of the segregated lane now takes the existing roundabout would have a 131-car queue and it now appears only to have a four-car queue, which is somewhat optimistic, but nevertheless that’s what it says. Whilst SCC have approved this capacity calculation, we have raised numerous concerns regarding the safety issues of the increased risks to vulnerable road users. SCC have confirmed that they have not analysed the junction with regards safety and have now asked HS2 for Stage One safety audits, which they say have been done, but as far as I’m aware, they still haven’t received them. For the benefit of the Committee, there are usually at least three, if not four, stages of the safety audit. Stage One is the preliminary design, which looks at the fundamental concept; you may well be aware of this, including all safety aspects.

24. THE CHAIR: Sorry, I’m going to ask you to say what you want or move on to your next point. A lot of this is background.

25. MR WILKINSON: Okay. So, it’s well-known that cycling is a dangerous occupation, particularly when cycling round roundabouts. LT208 states that many studies have shown a higher risk for cyclists and, more recently, Advice Note 195/16 Cycle Traffic and Strategic Network says roundabouts with a dedicated left turn lane to increase capacity for turning vehicles provide an additional hazard for on carriageway cycle paths, both where the lane diverges on the entry and where the lane merges with the exit. They shall not be used unless segregated cycling facilities are provided.


27. MRS MURRAY: So, are you asking us for designated cycling facilities at that junction?

28. MR WILKINSON:Possibly, possibly.

29. THE CHAIR: I’ll have to speed you up. I and my colleagues have asked a number of times in different places, what do you want; if you don’t tell us what you
want, we’ll move on to your next point, or you’ll end up being closed down, sorry.

30. MR WILKINSON: Can I have slide 4643 then, please? Anybody designing a roundabout with a segregated left turn lane would surely look at TD51(17), which is the guidance for providing such facilities. I draw your attention to 217, where it says, ‘Uncontrolled crossing points’, which is what HS2 have provided, ‘shall not be provided across segregated left turn lanes. It also deters cycling to use the segregated left turn lane and suggests that HS2, or suggests in the text, that the provision of formal signalised crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists should be provided, and additional adjoining cycle tracks around the roundabout’.

31. In addition, whilst this caters for that, I am concerned if we can have slide 1396(5) back? Whilst this is a concern coming round here and how they merge with fast traffic, the main concern is, particularly for a lot of the club riders, are all cyclists coming from the north maybe, but certainly coming from the west and coming round here, that as they come off the roundabout they face the arduous task of having 60 mph on their outside and accelerating 40 mph plus on their inside.

32. MR WIGGIN: Mr Wilkinson, can I interrupt? Isn’t this a matter for the county council, who are responsible for road safety, rather than the town or parish council?

33. MR WILKINSON: Well that’s why we’re raising these issues because the county council have just accepted the safety, the capacity calculations, with no reference whatsoever, that we’ve had to bring this up now. We did lobby them; they said they had informed HS2 of this, but it doesn’t appear to be the case.

34. MR WIGGIN: But, I mean, being really harsh, these bicyclists may not be your parishioners either. They are club cyclists from all over the country who’ve come to this place.

35. MR WILKINSON: I think there’s quite a lot of Stone cyclists there.

36. MR WIGGIN: I’m sure there are, but road safety is a matter for the county, surely, and for the highways authority?

37. MR WILKINSON: Well, because they’ve accepted this as it is, we’re saying, look you can’t accept this as a prelim design; it should fail a safety audit and provide
some protection for all road users there.

38. MR WIGGIN: We’re all happy about that, but I just wanted to just check why you were –

39. MR WILKINSON: Well we’ve got nowhere with the county council so that’s why we’re here.

40. MRS MURRAY: Can I ask? Have you made representations to the county council?

41. MR WILKINSON: Yes, yes, we wrote –

42. MRS MURRAY: Did they give you any reasons why they have accepted, as the local highways authority, the proposals that were already set out.

43. MR WILKINSON: As I’ve said earlier, they’ve said to me that they’ve only looked at the capacity, as they have at quite a lot of the junctions, and they’ve not looked at the detail of the safety issues.

44. MRS MURRAY: So, have you gone back to them since then and said of your concerns with regard to cyclists?

45. MR WILKINSON: Yes, we did that initially, and then they wrote to me and said that they’ve now asked for Stage One audits of HS2, which is quite alarming at this stage of the process. A prelim design should have been done and –

46. THE CHAIR: Sandy?

47. MR MARTIN: Mr Wilkinson, on this photograph, you say that there is only one of the four arms of this roundabout which currently has any crossing facilities at all? Is that the one on the A51? Yes, there, right.

48. MR WILKINSON: To facilitate the movement to and from the village hall, primarily.

49. MR MARTIN: Where is the village hall?

50. MR WILKINSON: The village hall is about – just off here, it’s about 200 metres
51. MR MARTIN: So, there is a pathway, there’s a walkway, a segregated walkway?

52. MR WILKINSON: Well just a footway, adjacent to the carriageway.

53. MR MARTIN: From the village hall, and then it goes across the A51?

54. MR WILKINSON: Yes.

55. MR MARTIN: And then the rest of the village is up here?

56. MR WILKINSON: Yes, just here, yes.

57. MR MARTIN: Right, fine. So, in your view, nobody is crossing the A34, and nobody is crossing the road to the left of the roundabout?

58. MR WILKINSON: Very few – there’s no facilities. If you want to cross the A34, you have to go up to a pedestrian crossing further up, to get to the industrial estate.

59. MR MARTIN: So, nobody in their right mind, would try to cross the A34 at this roundabout? However, I would suggest, given the number of lanes involved, you would have to be extremely brave indeed to cross the A51 under current circumstances?

60. MR WILKINSON: You would and it would be even more dangerous if you were to walk on to –

61. MR MARTIN: It would be extremely dangerous already?

62. MR WILKINSON: Yes.

63. MR MARTIN: And, furthermore, as a cyclist, I must admit I find roundabouts extremely difficult. I know from my own experience as a county councillor that the number of cyclists that have been killed on trunk roads in Suffolk at junctions like this is totally disproportionate and there has been a lot of publicity trying to encourage cyclists not to attempt such junctions at all. Don’t you think it’s a little bizarre that the cyclists should have positioned themselves next to a junction like this?

64. MR WILKINSON: Well I guess that’s where they could get a reasonable, cheap,
unit, but there’ve been cyclists up and down, there are commuters up and down the A34 longer –

65. MR MARTIN: So, there are cyclists who commute on the A34?

66. MR WILKINSON: They do, they’re braver men than me, but yes. There is a shared cycle route just past their village hall, that then takes you up quite a way on the A34.

67. MR MARTIN: So, a shared cycle path, a fantastic idea, but if there were a safe crossing across the A51 at this junction, that is probably the only place where you would need to have a safe crossing?

68. MR WILKINSON: For pedestrians, yes.

69. MR MARTIN: And cyclists? If cyclists didn’t want to –

70. MR WILKINSON: If you’ve got a cyclist coming round, which I think the TD refers to, if you’ve got a cyclist coming round here that then has to merge with traffic, fast traffic, on either side.

71. MR MARTIN: I’m sorry. We have motorways and we have dual carriageway trunk roads and I don’t think it’s possible to make them safe for cyclists, that’s just my personal opinion.

72. MR WILKINSON: Sorry?

73. MR MARTIN: That’s just my personal opinion.

74. THE CHAIR: We’ve covered that for the cyclists. Right, I’m going to move you on from this roundabout. Any other separate points? Otherwise I’ll come to HS2.

75. MR WILKINSON: There was just a little point there that –

76. THE CHAIR: No more little points, we’re moving on from the roundabout.

77. MR WILKINSON: Okay.

78. THE CHAIR: On to the next subject for HS2.
79. MR WILKINSON: Okay, so we’re on Yarnfield Lane, can I have A331(8)? Okay, this original junction was analysed in an environmental statement; HS2 said that it was quite within capacity and quite safe for use. We argued at the original Select Committee that we didn’t quite see how you could put a 10-metre vehicle across a 5-metre gap. That subsequently was changed by HS2. They then came up with a 4751 for AP1. They then came up with this option which is signalised across all lanes, no dedicated right turn lane. It’s a 50-mph road and if I can refer to A464(4), 251, ‘Where the approach speed is greater than 45 mph, there is an increased risk of accidents between right-turning vehicles seeking gaps in oncoming traffic. It is the recommended situation that right turns should be separately signalled’. Their particular design did not do that, it just let people gap and put a very cheap scheme in to be honest.

80. Subsequently, just after AP2 had been announced, we now see in P1398(1), we made recommendations to the county council. They said, again that there was a deceleration queue lane required, separate signalisation right turns, to operate the capacity of the junction. Can I have 1898(3), please? This should be the current latest proposal by –

81. THE CHAIR: If you had traffic lights here, you’d be happy?

82. MR WILKINSON: Safe traffic lights, absolutely. This is what I’m trying to get at if we can just –

83. MRS MURRAY: Don’t they have traffic lights proposed?

84. MR WILKINSON: They do, but you’ll see why –

85. MRS MURRAY: But in your opinion they don’t think they’re safe ones?

86. MR WILKINSON: They’re not. No, they’re not designed to the standards at all. In part, they are; we’ve finally got them to see some sort of sense, but can we have this drawing, please? Okay, so, finally, now we have got HS2 to provide a separate dedicated lane. It then runs at its own stage. They have actually produced now – there is, you’ll notice here – a gap in the central reserve here for right turners into Trent Road, and I think it’s a feature that Mr Martin commented about, the proximity of it, last time we were here. But they now provide a facility for 35 metres. Well, the TD quite clearly
states that for storage processes, a), they should be able to store freely and not queue back and interrupt the flow there; and, conversely, the flow queuing here should not block that. This is 35 metres. The standard length we’re talking about, the queuing length, should be at least 79 vehicles, which puts this back here before you put a deceleration lane.

87. Conversely, the queue at the lights at the moment is to be about 23 vehicles, that’s 12 in each lane. That gives you a storage there of about 70 metres, so there’s no way that the right turn – we just want to know if the Committee recommend that they provide it to the particular T50/04, and block that gap off, and provide safe access to the right turn lane.

88. THE CHAIR: Sandy?

89. MR MARTIN: Yeah, Mr Wilkinson, it appears to me what you’re calling for is for the eastern section of Yarnfield Lane to be moved further away from the western section of Yarnfield Lane. I mean it’s not possible, is it? Yarnfield Lane is where it is, and you’ve got a dog leg, but you can’t make the dog leg bigger.

90. MR WILKINSON: No, the demand for that – there is a very sub-standard deceleration lane there into a right turn which is –

91. MR MARTIN: Yes, but if you shorten one of them, then you’d lengthen the other one. If you lengthen one of them –

92. MR WILKINSON: The question was that that should be shut and that’s the whole point, that they don’t use it, and that this now – if you create this 35-metre you will have vehicles queuing in the outside lane of a 50-mph road. So, it should conform to the standards whereby that entrance into that particular right turn lane, and storage lane, is lengthened which will result in that being shut. End of.

93. MR MARTIN: Is it not going to be necessary to – sorry I don’t know the name of the road at the bottom – that is Yarnfield Lane as well, isn’t it?

94. MR WILKINSON: This is Yarnfield Lane, this is Trent Road.

95. MR MARTIN: Oh, Trent Road, is it? Right, okay.
96. MR WILKINSON: A very narrow road.

97. MR MARTIN: Is it not going to be necessary to travel from Yarnfield Lane into Trent Road?

98. MR WILKINSON: It is as a rat run because of the queuing down here, but you only have to go up to do a safe manoeuvre because that’s a sub-standard storing area; go up to the roundabout if you want to go down.


100. MR WILKINSON: But then you would go safely down Newcastle Road. This is just a short cut.

101. MR MARTIN: So, in other words, what you’re talking about is making Trent Road left in, left out, and the only way into Trent Road would be up to the roundabout and round the back?

102. MR WILKINSON: You reduce the rear end shunt collisions and make it a far safer access.

103. MR MARTIN: Thank you.

104. THE CHAIR: That’s clear, any other issues?

105. MR WILKINSON: Yes, just Yarnfield Lane, can I have 331(12), Yarnfield Bridge? Sorry, 331(12). This is the existing Yarnfield Lane bridge, where currently the traffic goes over Yarnfield Lane from the motorway. It will be replaced ultimately but, at the moment, it will be used in part, the initial part of the contract where HGVs will utilise this, it’s only 5.4 metres wide there, total span parapet to parapet 9 metres. Originally, we were told that the new bridge would be 9 metres wide, similar, with a very narrow maybe 6 metres and two 1.5s. SCC and ourselves initiated the fact that this wasn’t wide enough, a), for two-way HGV lorries; and it should be 6.8 and provision for cyclists and pedestrians.

106. Can I have 1396(11)? We presented this argument to the Committee at AP1, and HS2 slide here, and the Committee instructed HS2 to provide appropriate lane widths for road users, all road users, to cross Yarnfield Lane overbridge. Nothing really
seemed to change. We were told by HS2 at a meeting with the Stone Town Council 23 March, that they were now providing 6 metre running lanes still and two 2.5 metre lanes that could be divided up, which came to 11 metres.

107. THE CHAIR: Can I just check? You may be getting to something that is orderly and within AP2, it’s not incumbent upon HS2 to clarify everything from the Bill and AP1, before AP2 happens or in AP2. If you’re simply going back and saying that what you’ve asked for isn’t updated in AP2, that’s not orderly.

108. MR WILKINSON: Well, we have confusion because a month ago HS2 was saying it was 11 metres, the county council are now saying in their comments to the AP2, that it’s now 12 metres. We’d like some clarification on that.

109. THE CHAIR: Okay, any other points?

110. MR WILKINSON: No, we would like the bridge to be, the old bridge will be demolished and the new bridge –

111. THE CHAIR: Sorry, are there any other points additional to the bridge, because we’ve done this already the bridge, so you’re not introducing anything new. So, any other points and then I’ll call HS2?

112. MR PARKIN: Sorry Mr Chair, can he just finish the point on the bridge? There’s one more point on the bridge and I have other points to make about other points of AP2.

113. MR WILKINSON: Yeah there’s a concern about – the county council said that the two A lorries, excessive lorry numbers, would be –

114. THE CHAIR: Sorry, Mr Parkin, I’m not sure that this is relevant to the scheme, but not, I don’t think, to AP2, and no new information is coming forward that we haven’t already covered. So, unless you’re going to push back to me and evidence why it’s specifically relevant to AP2 rather than the whole scheme, I’m going to insist you move on.

115. MR PARKIN: Okay, I’ll just answer that. I would say that the reason why we’ve raised the issue of the widening of the bridge, it has not been dealt with by HS2 in AP2, even though that was part of your recommendation from the Second Special Report.
116. THE CHAIR: I’m not sure that is correct. We did not even know there was going to be an AP2 at that juncture. We said what should happen, not how that’s supposed to be done.

117. MR PARKIN: You made a recommendation that the bridge should be widened in your Second Special Report and nothing has been done about it. Our concern is that nothing will be done about it and that, actually, what we, coming to what we want is, we want the bridge to be 12 metres wide with a 6.8 metre carriageway, as recommended by the county council, and we also want the rest of the road, as it passes under the railhead to be widened to the same width, in order to be safe for all road users.

118. THE CHAIR: Right, the Committee’s position hasn’t changed. I’ll ask you to move on.

119. MR PARKIN: Okay, if I can then pick up the points that I am giving evidence on. I want to give evidence about the indicative programme, which has been provided in AP2, and in that case I would like to refer first to the AP2 ES CA3 report, pages 8 and 9. Right, this is the latest programme and, helpfully, HS2 have made it relatively easy to see. It’s mainly the first page that I’m interest in here. You will see the original programme is coloured blue, the changes to the programme in terms of adding additional quarters, this is in quarters of years, are in purple, and the reduction in time is shown in the orange colour. Any additional stuff is shown in the green highlight.

120. You will see that when it comes to the key operations which are taking place on Yarnfield Lane, we have had them brought forward by 12 months and, indeed, in terms of most of the works, HS2 has now a very ambitious programme to suggest that these cannot only start at the end of the second quarter, beginning of third quarter, 2020, which is just over 12 months away, but also that the construction time of these very large structures will be reduced in total. Indeed, in terms of the Yarnfield Lane underbridge, we are talking about a shortening of 9 months and, in terms of the overbridge, we’re talking about a period of six months.

121. If I could move on to A465(1) to (9) and I don’t need to spend much time on these. In fact, if you go to A465(6) to (8), it will save some time. We had a meeting with HS2, Stone Town Council, on 23 April, so a couple of weeks back, and HS2 in response to our petition, produced a series of new phasing plans. The plans cover
various quarters through the programme. They’re not actually consistent with the bar chart that I’ve just shown you, but I won’t dwell on the details. I particularly want to concentrate on 465(6), (7) and (8), which shows a yellow haul road. You can see it coloured yellow, I’ll highlight if I can, if my mouse works. So, this yellow haul road here is actually the existing Yarnfield Lane. That’s gone smaller; did I do that? That’s the existing Yarnfield Lane being used as a haul road, and HS2’s proposition is that it can operate the existing Yarnfield Lane as a haul road, whilst operating the brand new Yarnfield Lane, once it’s constructed and operational, at the same time. Stone Town Council’s position on this is this is not possible, and we want to give evidence as to why it’s not possible because the whole process and the whole design of the Stone railhead hinges on this particular point.

122. If I can now turn to A475(3), what we have done here is we’ve taken HS2’s slide. It’s actually slide 29. It was the third one of those, and we’ve blown it up in terms of size. Now what this actually shows is that Yarnfield Lane now, the yellow line here, is actually, you can see how it U-turns in quite a small space. What is not quite so clear is actually we don’t believe that that yellow line is actually Yarnfield Lane at all, once it gets across the western side of the motorway. We believe it is a fictitious yellow line, which is actually parallel, and offset from Yarnfield Lane. And the reason why we can give evidence on this, if we go to slide – I’ll get my bearings. A464(10). Sorry, I meant A464(8), apologies for that. This is a view of Yarnfield Lane as it stands at the moment, and Yarnfield Lane is in a dead straight line, virtually all the way across the bridge until it gets too close to where the emergency access to the M6 is, which is there, and the access to a place called Whitemore Farm.

123. When you go back to HS2’s drawing and you look at it very, very closely – and so if we can go back to A475(3) please?

124. THE CHAIR: Sandy?

125. MR MARTIN: Mr Parkin, can you explain to me who would be likely to be disadvantaged by any misdrawing of this road, other than HS2? It’s going to be in the middle of their construction site.

126. MR PARKIN: Well we don’t believe that the turning lane that they’ve created in use as a haul road is actually physically possible.
127. MR MARTIN: Well that might be a nuisance for them but it’s not going to make a major difference to anyone else, is it?

128. MR PARKIN: Well, it does make a huge difference to it, because if they can’t build it all of that traffic is going to be on the public road, Yarnfield Lane, with the rest of us.

129. MR MARTIN: Well they’ll just have to build the haul road slightly different from what it’s drawn, won’t they?

130. MR PARKIN: Sorry?

131. MR MARTIN: Won’t they just have to build the haul road very slightly differently from what it’s drawn?

132. MR PARKIN: Well, they can’t. They haven’t got room. And so, that’s the point. They’ve offset it. That line is offset by 5 degrees.

133. THE CHAIR: We’re going to move on now, you’ve made your point. Sheryll, then we’ll move on to another point and to HS2.

134. MRS MURRAY: Chair, could it be that this is just an error with the drawing and I don’t think it is to scale?

135. THE CHAIR: Listen to HS2.

136. MR PARKIN: Can I cut to the chase quickly on this? They’ve produced a plan at a tiny scale which is so blurred it’s hardly readable.

137. THE CHAIR: Right, you’ve made your point –

138. MR PARKIN: We have proved that it’s 5 degrees offset.

139. THE CHAIR: We’re going to move on from that point now. Any other points? I want to hear from HS2 on that subject.

140. MR PARKIN: I haven’t finished the point though. Can I not finish the point?

141. THE CHAIR: Can you be much more pithy? You’ve taken quite a long time –
142. MR PARKIN: Can I really cut to the chase on how important this is? If we go to A464(10), that yellow line is actually sitting over embankment, which is buying 6 metres, and this plan shows a turning circle of an HGV, which is actually the radius from outer road to outer road, which is 26 metres. HS2 has effectively taken 12 metres which don’t exist and, when you look at the details of their plans, they haven’t got room to do that U-turn, which means they cannot actually use the existing Yarnfield Lane as a haul road. And what we request is the detailed engineering drawings to prove it.

143. THE CHAIR: Next point.

144. MR PARKIN: HS2 to prove it.

145. THE CHAIR: Next point.

146. MR PARKIN: Okay, if I can refer to A465(2)? The point I want to make now is about how unrealistic the HS2 programme is. It’s been brought forward 12 months, to start effectively in the early part of 2020. If we look at Phase One, Phase One was granted Royal Assent in February 2017, that’s nearly two and a half years ago, and Phase One hasn’t got a decision to proceed until the end of this year.

147. THE CHAIR: Okay, we’ve covered the points on the petition; you’ve made that additional point. I want to hear from HS2 on all those points. Mr Mould?

**Response by Mr Mould**

148. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Thank you, if we go back to P1396(5), the point raised in relation to the A51 Stone bypass, A34 Stafford Road roundabout junction, is that there is an existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing on the A51 westbound approach to the junction, and that that needs to be considered carefully and properly for safety considerations. That is a stage in the process of preparing the detailed design of that junction that HS2 is now embarking upon. There are two possible outcomes: one is that the view is taken by the county council that that is so little used as a crossing that the right course is simply to remove it; the second is that the crossing ought to remain but that it needs to be signalised and an appropriate scheme for its signalisation and probably its relocation somewhat to the east, so that it’s a little bit away from the roundabout itself.
149. Those two options will form the basis for the safety audit as it continues and they will be incorporated into the detailed design which, as the Committee of course knows, we will have to submit to the county council under the terms of schedule four to this Bill once it becomes law for their approval. So that’s my answer to that.

150. THE CHAIR: Sheryll?

151. MRS MURRAY: You might not be able to, Mr Mould, but if you have to submit plans to the county council, would the parish council be a statutory consultee on any plans that they were to approve?

152. MR MOULD QC (DfT): They wouldn’t be a statutory consultee but, under the arrangements that we have set in place in our response to your report, which the petitioners touched upon, this being a matter which is obviously of local issue to this parish council, this would be a matter that as and when it is considered by the highways sub-group would be drawn to their attention, the agenda items would be provided to them, and they would have an opportunity to raise that particular point under the aegis of that forum.

153. THE CHAIR: Sandy?

154. MR MARTIN: Mr Mould, it does occur to me that the main movement of pedestrians and, presumably, of any cyclists other than club cyclists who want to cycle round roundabouts, would be under or across the A51. Would the safe crossing options that you’re looking at include the possibility of an underpass on the A51?

155. MR MOULD QC (DfT): I think that’s probably unlikely, simply because I understand that, generally speaking, underpasses are not favoured as a means of providing a crossing; it’s generally considered to be preferable these days to have crossings at grade, so the pedestrians don’t have to go underneath and through tunnels. But, again, as I understand it, the degree of usage that the surveys show actually takes place on this crossing would mean that it would be disproportionate to incur the costs of an underpass, and it would be much more in proportion to that usage to provide a signalised crossing, as I say, some yards to the east along the A51 which, of course, could be used not only by pedestrians, but also by cyclists wheeling their bicycles across the road. The reason why it needs to go a little to the east is, I am told, is because one
wants to avoid any risk of traffic that is turning left out of the A34 South, and then going down the A51 in a southbound direction, any risk of the red sequence on that crossing causing that traffic to block that and interfere with traffic going round the roundabout. But that movement, on our model, suggests that if the crossing were placed some tens of metres beyond the approach to the roundabout itself, there would be no significant risk of that kind of problem arising, even during peak times.

156. MR MARTIN: Yes, if I could just come back on that. I hear what you’re saying about underpasses and at grade crossings; however, I think it does depend on the nature of the road concerned. And when you have four or five or six, in this case it’s going to be six or seven lanes, isn’t it, and a trunk road, I think it probably makes it slightly different. I mean, certainly in my experience, we’ve had crossings deliberated with the A11 and the A14 and, in both cases, an at grade junction was not ever going to be used. I mean, possibly one of the reasons why this crossing is not used much is because it’s virtually suicidal to use it at the moment.

157. MR MOULD QC (DfT): It’s possible. As you move eastwards, along the A51, I think I’m right in saying that the road is a standard two-lane carriageway. I’ll be corrected if I’m wrong about that, but I don’t think, if I may say, sir, I’d be surprised if it compares directly to the sort of roads that you’ve just mentioned, the A14 and the A11, which are very busy, noisy lane roads,¹ albeit they’re part of the trunk road network. In any event, we don’t need to be definitive about this now, because, as I say, the key point is you’ve been asked to acknowledge the need for a safety audit in relation to that crossing. I’ve said that that is a necessary part of the detailed design process which is about to begin effectively.

158. THE CHAIR: Move on to Yarnfield Lane then.

159. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes, so if we go to P1398(3), you were shown this slide. In a sense, this slide speaks for itself. You’ll remember that the reason why we brought forward this change to the Bill, so as to signalise what is presently a simple priority junction, is because the county council asked us to bring forward a scheme to signalise

¹ Note by witness: this should read ‘multi lane roads’
it, and they also said that they wanted that scheme to be a permanent scheme; they
didn’t want it to be returned to a priority junction once the works had been completed.
So, we were content to bring that AP forward, and this is the result of that.

160. Now, clearly, the detail of how that signalisation scheme is played through so that
it operates to the optimal degree is still work in progress. But what this shows you is
that HS2, as the slide says, is confident that it can address the difficulty that the
petitioners have raised; that is to say the risk that traffic queuing to turn right into
Yarnfield Lane from A34 South, that that traffic queues to such a degree that it begins to
cause a conflict with southbound traffic on the A34. The way to do that is to fine tune
the length of the right turn lane, to adjust the design of the splitter island, possibly even
to consider speed restrictions on that southbound route so as to slow down the through
traffic so that the risk of any conflict is reduced. But, as you can see, that work is in
progress and HS2, my instructions are, HS2 has no reason to doubt that a solution that is
acceptable to the county council will be found through the detailed design process and
within the highway lands and the AP lands that are provided for.

161. THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Mould. Mr Parkin, your witness is
indicating to me that he wishes to cross-examine Mr Mould; that is wholly inappropriate
for comment. Sorry, I’m just setting out for the Committee how things will work. Mr
Mould will answer questions from the Committee. I’ll then come to you if you have any
final comments, just summarising any small points. If you wish to call a witness at that
point, I’ll be lenient and allow you to do that, but there’ll be no interventions with Mr
Mould.

162. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Thank you, Sir. So I don’t think I can improve on the
message that you have on the screen in front of you in relation to that.

163. THE CHAIR: Let’s move on then.

164. MR MOULD QC (DfT): So, we then turn to the next issue, which is the haul
road, the ability of the haul road just to the west of the M6 to accommodate HS2
construction traffic turning movements on the internal routing. That I think was shown
on A465, that was (6), if I remember rightly. And when we get there, you’ll remember
that, I think it was Mr Parkin rather than Mr Wilkinson, who told us that the council had
measured off the dimensions here, and they had a concern that HS2 construction
vehicles wouldn’t be able to make the turn around that U-turn, at the bottom of the page there.

165. I am told by those who know about these matters from a technical perspective, behind me, that firstly that yellow line is not suitable to be measured off in the precise way that is mentioned; it’s an indicative line. There is ample land within the red hatching, which you see on that plan, which of course are the lands that are available to HS2, to enable the requisite turning circle. I’m told that a 30-metre diameter is required for the sort of vehicles that need to make that turn and that greater than 40 metres is available. That’s the horizontal point. As the change in vertical alignment which was mentioned, I’m told that there is no difficulty in principle with addressing that through a mixture of retaining walls and so on. So, HS2 is confident that it is able, through detailed design, on this construction site can provide a haul road here that will accommodate, satisfactorily, the construction vehicles that need to pass around it. In that way, the concern that we’re, as it were, setting ourselves up to make much greater use of Yarnfield Lane, that you’ve stated, that that fear is, in fact, unfounded.

166. In terms of the ambitious programme, the programme is one that has been reviewed with a view to trying to get the works at this location completed as quickly as possible so as to limit the amount of time that we need to use Yarnfield Lane, a matter which you looked at in considerable detail last summer, and this petitioner has been able to produce this series of slides because they were provided to them by HS2’s engagement team recently who took them through, at a meeting, I think last month, took them through the basis upon which that programme has been drawn up, in considerable detail. So I don’t propose, unless you’d like me to, to go through that in great detail, but HS2 is confident that it can achieve this programme and it has told the petitioners in some detail why it is so confident and will, of course, continue to provide them with information about that as the detail of the scheme progresses.

167. THE CHAIR: Excellent. Sandy?

168. MR MARTIN: Yes, can I ask Mr Mould about the bridge? One of the issues raised by the petitioners is the width of the bridge. Is the new bridge – Yarnfield Lane new bridge – going to be as wide as we asked it to be?

169. MR MOULD QC (DfT): The bridge, both the existing bridge and the new bridge,
there is ample land available within HS2’s Bill limits to be able to accommodate the widths that are required, both to fulfil the Committee’s direction and also to enable this railway to be constructed and, following its construction, those who use Yarnfield Lane to get to and from Yarnfield from Stone, to do so on an appropriately sized modern public highway.

170. MR MARTIN: So, what you’re saying is that the detailed construction design of the bridge has not yet been finalised?

171. MR MOULD QC (DfT): It hasn’t been finalised, but there is ample land within our control to enable us to accommodate both our construction needs and to accommodate the needs of the public travelling along the highway, and to fulfil the direction that you gave to us last year about widening the bridge in your report.

172. MR MARTIN: Thank you.

173. THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Mould. Mr Parkin, do you want to take a minute just to come back on anything, rather than making new points, obviously?

174. MR PARKIN: I’m not going to make any new points. I would just like to come back to the haul road issue, and if we could have a look at A464(9) please? Now, this is a plan. I’m an engineer. I know how to use a scale rule, and this is based on an A3 plan at 1:5000 scale. We’ve blown it up for information. You will see that the new Yarnfield Lane is here. You will see that it is placed on a very substantial embankment with a 1 in 2.5 slide slope. That takes up an inordinate amount of space and I can tell you that, when you use a scale rule, there is less than 20 metres at the point where this U-turn’s going to make. And, if HS2 is so confident that it can produce this haul road using the old Yarnfield Lane, the only thing we request is engineering drawings to prove it, at scale, with the grades. And if they provided that –

175. THE CHAIR: I’ll just pause you because I think Mr Mould was going to helpfully come in?

176. MR MOULD QC (DfT): I see no reason not to provide Mr Parkin with such drawings at the appropriate time.

177. MR PARKIN: What’s the appropriate time?
178. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well we’re not yet in a position to produce detailed engineering design drawings because we haven’t got to that stage.

179. THE CHAIR: I think we’ll bank that gain, Mr Parkin. That’s a gain.

180. MR WIGGIN: As soon as possible would be helpful.

181. MR PARKIN: Can we set a date on that, please?

182. THE CHAIR: No. Any other points?

183. MR PARKIN: I was going to sum up. The only final point, I’m not going to sum up, but the only final point I want to make is that you may be aware that there is now a new parish council representing Yarnfield, it’s called Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council. We are no longer represented by Swynnerton and if the Committee and HS2 could be aware of that, and address all correspondence that had gone relative to the Stone railhead, to Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council, we’d very grateful.

184. THE CHAIR: Sorry, Sheryll?

185. MRS MURRAY: First of all, if it was a new parish council, surely Swynnerton would pass on that information, if it related to an area they didn’t represent, and when were they constituted to be –

186. MR PARKIN: 1 April 2019.

187. MRS MURRAY: So, this pre-dates – they could have actually submitted, they could have petitioned?

188. MR PARKIN: But for future –

189. THE CHAIR: Yes, noted for future correspondence. To not leave anything on the table, I’m trying to make progress, so please, pithy, but if you’ve got something to say.

190. MR WILKINSON: Yes, Yarnfield Lane, A34 junction, the county council in their response to the AP2 categorically told HS2 that they couldn’t reduce the speed limit, that they had to provide right turn lanes and storage lanes were sufficient in table 290 of their response, page 42, and they still come back with a sub-standard drawing which beggars belief.
191. THE CHAIR: Okay, point made. I don’t think there’s any need to go on further. Thank you very much. That draws to a close that petitioner. For the information of everyone here, Swynnerton Parish Council have withdrawn; they decided not to come before us, but they have written to HS2, and that letter has been provided to the Committee, and that will go on to our website.

192. Could we now bring forward the next petitioner, Newcastle Road residents? The Committee hoped to make slightly more speedy progress. We were hoping to get through three petitioners in the next 50 minutes. I am conscious also – I was very lenient on the right to appear challenge on Newcastle Road residents, so I feel almost like the case has been made already, the compelling case: you’re affected, otherwise you wouldn’t not be here. We are in your hands.

Newcastle Road Residents

Submissions by Ms Morris-Goostrey

193. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Okay, thank you. If you bring up the overview photograph, reference A470(1). Just to say, good afternoon everybody, Committee, HS2, etc, and greetings from Staffordshire. Thank you for allowing our return following our visit on 3 April and you can see, basically on this drawing, we have an overview of the junction 15 of the M6 with the Hanchurch Interchange.

194. Where it shows Eddie Stobart, right in the middle of the drawing, and then you have got the word ‘Clayton’. Underneath that word ‘Clayton’ is our row of 16 houses that were going to be directly and specially affected by the proposal to put in four lane road outside our houses, just for a short space.

195. It is one of the most notoriously reported junctions and traffic reports nationally and locally on a daily basis and directly opposite the Eddie Stobart. It shows our properties and Eddie Stobart has, as we have just seen in the previous evidence, that hairpin turn from their unit, out of their compound that goes down that road that says ‘Clayton’. So round that massive turn there. We’re actually going to be directly affected, it’s going to be measuring less than the 200 metres, and as the current junction exists, we’ve been advised it would fail the safety audit in its current format. I will refer to, and pass on to Gordon Wilkinson, as our witness in a short while.
196. Off-peak currently it is like a racetrack, and on-peak, it is reliant on courtesy drivers, but not everyone is. The majority are in a hurry. There are near misses, they are regular occurrences, and it’s currently set at national speed limit, we’ve got major safety concerns outside our homes which isn’t not directly an HS2 problem.

197. We understand that a reasonable speed restriction has now been put to the local councils, Swynnerton Parish Council have put forward to – and Staffordshire Council, and it is going to be 30 or 40 mile an hour, depending on the technical side of matters; this will then remain following the construction of the road, should it proceed.

198. Should the four lanes be passed for design and build, will we be able to negotiate a right – we won’t be able to negotiate a right turn from our driveways to access to the M6, we would have to go into the flow of traffic and do a triangle around. We need to know a safety concern of how we are going to actually get off our driveways, and that is something that we would all like. We have had assurances that it would be safely constructed, but we would like to know how.

199. All residents are going to be virtual prisoners, we have to reverse onto our driveways to enable ease of leaving your drive in the morning. All residents, especially houses number one, three and five will be especially affected. So, if I could then go back to overview photograph A470(5).

200. So in the corner where the number three is in the corner, we have a solid black line coming round here that shows properties number one, three and five have got this solid black line, which is the end construction. Those residents in that particular area will be virtual prisoners, they won’t be able to go out at all. It is difficult to negotiate in its present format, it’s going to be even worse at that point there.

201. This morning, just as an example, the other end of that row of houses, the residents at number 31 advised that she was making a steady attempt at reversing off her drive, the traffic light’s on red, another driver wouldn’t let her exit and she wanted to stay in the queue for the lights, and her words were, ‘It’s a good job I’m patient’, and she had to sit and wait for that gap in traffic and a courteous driver, and that is what she is up against.

202. Two days after our right to be heard visit here on 3 April, we were invited to a
meeting in the village hall with Swynnerton Parish Council and HS2. The whole proposal was discussed with detail, and we were assured that studies and observations had taken place prior to the release of the correspondence received to the residents in February.

203. We have also advised that it showed very little or no footfall in the walking area which you can refer to down in the area where the solid black line is, goes to where the pedestrian crossing is, which I will come back to that in a moment. Swynnerton Parish Council have been satisfied with solutions offered, except for the Newcastle Road residents, which they felt it was best that we attended as we can deliver the petition in the knowledge as we live it, we have it on our doorsteps, and they’re not actually here today.

204. Okay referring to – if I can have a A471(8) please. So that currently shows the footpath on its way down to the crossing, and anybody in their right mind wouldn’t even attempt to cross that road, regardless of being busy or not. That is the approach from the A500 Queensway. I would suggest that that wagon on that photograph is heading for the M6, as he’s approaching that roundabout. You can see that the footpath is very little used, because people just would not take their lives into their hands. I walk my dog down there, that’s when I took the photographs and my dog was even complaining about the – under her paws, bless her.

205. Then I have got A471(9), please. That shows a little bit closer, it’s the same photograph but a little bit further on. It shows there is all the debris there, nobody takes any care of it, because people just are not interested to go that way. To walk from the A519 to cross that Queensway Road is not undertaken lightly. It has access to the local shops, doctors and pubs, and to cross at this point, you would literally put your life in the road user’s hands.

206. We originally suggested at this point an on demand crossing facility. This has had a suggestion of a proposed crossing further up the A500, as per the promoter’s exhibit P1429(5).

207. THE CHAIR: Notwithstanding the points you are making now, your main issue is access to your properties?
208. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: It is.

209. THE CHAIR: Everything else is important but separate, okay.

210. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Yes. To actually go from the actual roundabout where the photograph was, further up where the red arrow is, on the approximate location of a potential signalised pedestrian crossing, I think that wouldn’t be an acceptable thing. This is something that has obviously got to be put to HS2, and for them to consider.

211. THE CHAIR: Sorry, I’m not sure I heard; did you say it would be unacceptable or acceptable thing?

212. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Unacceptable, yes. It’s too far away. If you look at it in real terms, nobody in their right mind is going to want to walk all the way up that hill, because it’s an uphill gradient as well. Cyclists may like it, joggers may like it, but me walking my dog? I don’t think so. Then going back to A479(5).

213. So up at the top where the corner for one is, that goes from the M6 motorway and goes across to go up the Clayton Road, and then where the number two is on the other corner, there are proposals there for dedicated left lanes. If I can show the next two photographs, A471(6). So, coming left off the M6, going up that road, it’s completely empty. There is no reason, rhyme or reason to have that segregated left turn, because it is free-flowing anyway, and nobody really needs to. And the same with A471(7), coming down the Clayton Road, left hand lane is almost clear again, so there wouldn’t be any reason to actually spend that sort of money on doing those segregated lanes, which would then, in turn sort of like be cheeky, and ask to have maybe an overbridge footpath crossing, across the area lower down. But I don’t know how that would work because I am not technical, I’m just a lay person.

214. The other concern, as well as the safety, is the air quality. Air quality and pollution with standstill traffic with the proposed four lanes outside, during four years of construction, that will be massive. We haven’t seen any reports that we have requested at the local HS2 Swynnerton Parish Council meeting. We would still like to receive this information.
215. Currently we would like to see 24/7 real time monitoring for air quality with a monthly feedback to see what is going on with the air quality there, because there is going to be some big trucks – there are big trucks sat outside there all day, every day, now.

216. MRS MURRAY: Just very quickly, how long has Eddie Stobart had his compound there?

217. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: I would suggest they’ve been there probably about 10 years now.

218. MR MARTIN: Thank you.

219. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: I am still a new resident there. We bought the house three years ago, we moved in 12 months ago, so we’re new kids on the block, and we’re the one making all the noise for all the residents who have been there 30-plus years. I’ve stuck my head up and gone, ‘Well, I’ll do something about it’. They’ve all gone, ‘Okay’. So that is where we are up to with that one.

220. We would like to see a 24/7 real time monitor for air quality with feedback, presently, and then moving forwards as well. We have had a quote from the Swinton Parish Council to the promoter. This is from Kate Ong, and she has put, ‘We do appreciate that this is not solely a problem for HS2, nor are these proposals cast in stone. Whilst not a cause of existing problems, HS2 Ltd must accept that their proposals will add considerable hardship to the residents of Newcastle Road, and do everything possible to lessen its effects, both during and after construction. This particular assurance from HS2 Ltd still falls short of the assurance that we are seeking for the residents’.

221. I would now like to pass over to Gordon Wilkinson to present the technical side of things please.

222. THE CHAIR: Technical side of what, sorry?

223. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Of the roundabouts and the crossing.

224. THE CHAIR: I think you have been very, very clear. I am conscious as well, we
heard a lot. I think I would much prefer to hear from HS2. We can then ascertain what, if any of the remaining issues, then you can call witness on the specifics. Sandy?

225. MR MARTIN: I’d just quickly like to ask Ms Morris-Goostrey if there was going to be something that gave easier access to your properties, it would probably involve a dedicated lane in front of your houses. I cannot see how, given the amount of traffic that is going to be using Newcastle Road, and the nature of the road, and the junctions on either end of it, how you can make it easier to get on and off Newcastle Road, unless you have a separate roadway. As I am sure you know, alongside some major roads in some parts of the country, there are separate road ways. Would that be the sort of solution that the local residents are looking at, or is there something else that you have got in mind?

226. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Not necessarily; because the road is coming up, right directly outside of our house, I’ve got one that says, ‘Welcome to Hanchurch’ on it. So if you were to put up A471(11), so as I said, when I walked my dog down the path to go and have a look at the crossing, this is turning round walking back up the other way when this picture comes up. That shows you the width of the road, and what would be necessary there if you were wanting to go to make a dedicated lane for us. However, I suspect that people would then see that as a rat run to be able to avoid the traffic.

227. MR MARTIN: It depends on how easy it is to get on and off it, doesn’t it?

228. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Exactly.

229. THE CHAIR: Let’s hear from Mr Mould.

Response from Mr Mould

230. MR MOULD QC (DfT): If I put up P1472, second page, I’ll just show you the – this is just to give a flavour of where we have got to in terms of the assurances we have offered. Just to deal with each of the points in turn.

231. The first point, and I think the point of greatest concern is the point about residents on the eastern side of the Newcastle Road being able to turn right against the flow of traffic, which would be coming on two lanes, instead of one, and having to turn into
traffic going north on two lanes instead of one because it is going to turn from a two lane road into a four lane road, so I understand the concern.

232. At the moment, my understanding of the position is that that road at peak time certainly is very heavily congested. It’s nose to tail. The challenge for anybody who wants to come out of their drive on the east side of Newcastle Road, turn right to go up to the roundabout, and no doubt go into Stoke or whatever it may be, the challenge is to fight their way into that almost stationary flow of vehicles, and wait till somebody is considerate and courteous enough to let you come through and then to turn in. That is, in a sense, an easy option that those of us who live in busy urban areas are familiar with that kind of problem.

233. Here, the concern is that once you free up the capacity so that you allow people to travel faster, then it becomes more difficult to get into the flow. The only practical solution to that that we could come up with is the one that the residents have come up with, which is you impose an urban area speed limit on that length of road, ideally 30 or at a pinch, 40 miles an hour, and you reinforce that by having very clear road signs at the top of the road showing 30 miles an hour. You have vehicle activated signs along the road to remind people that it is 30 miles an hour, and you have 30 miles an hour painted on in those white boxes on the road. That is what we have suggested, and that is reflected in the insurance-assurance that you see at paragraph 1.4 on the page in front of you.

234. The reason why we can’t say we’ll do it is because, as you will appreciate, it is ultimately a matter for the local highway authority, I think this is Staffordshire County Council’s road, but one can see the obvious force in that, the concomitant management tool to actually giving greater capacity for traffic on that road so it can move more freely is to slow it down so that people who live on the road are able to get out of their drives and turn right across the flow of traffic without the perception at least of people driving straight at them at 40 or 45/50 miles an hour.

235. The solution that Mr Martin floated of providing a kind of an accommodation lane to operate, I think we did discuss that with the residents, or certainly both of us have considered it, and we had the same concerns that Ms Morris-Goostrey reported, the concerns that it might actually be misused by people who thought that they could steal a
march on the traffic on the road.

236. I am afraid I can’t offer you anything more than: let’s ask the traffic that is able to travel more freely, let’s ask it to slow itself down to speeds that are appropriate to an urban area, which is essentially what this is.

237. THE CHAIR: Have you spoken to Staffordshire County Council? Sorry, has HS2 spoken staff Staffordshire County Council?

238. MR MOULD QC (DfT): I think we have.

239. THE CHAIR: And got an indication of their view of this possibility?

240. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes, I think we have, and I think they are prepared to give it serious consideration.

241. THE CHAIR: And you presumably – sorry to put words into your mouth, you will make reasonable endeavours to make this happen, if Staffordshire council are supportive?

242. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Oh, yes. I think in HS2 collectively, there is a clear view that this is the right solution, and that if Staffordshire County Council are willing to accept it and make the appropriate orders, then that is what will happen.

243. The speed, whatever the speed limit should be, as I say, there’s a powerful argument that it should be 30 miles an hour in each direction, not least because that takes you to another point, there was a concern about air quality. At the moment, one of the things that is no doubt contributing to a sense, if not a reality of poor air quality, is that where, as we know, when you have got vehicles regularly bumper to bumper, waiting on congested streets, it tends to increase the rate of vehicle emissions and pollutants. If the traffic is able to move freely, then it tends to reduce the level of emissions and pollutants. And if you can keep traffic at a relatively low speed, it tends to increase the chances that most of the time is going to be flowing freely. These are all matters of common sense that we do not need to be highways engineers to be able to speak to.

244. So, the answer to that point about air quality is, we think that the HS2 proposal, if
it is accompanied by sensible traffic management measures of the kind that I have mentioned, will actually help overall to improve the air quality situation. Our own assessment shows that, during the construction period, there is not expected to be a significant worsening of air quality on that road. So, for that reason, we are not inclined to include the continuous monitoring that the petitioner has asked for.

245. There are, of course, initiatives carried out at local level these days throughout urban areas to monitor air quality because of the stringent rules that now apply to seeking to maintain and achieve good, good clean air in urban areas, but we do not consider that the effect of HS2 is such, of our own assessment, to justify the 24/7 monitoring that the petitioner has asked for.

246. Can I just put up P1429(2), because I just want to deal, if I may briefly, with the other points raised. This is to deal with the concerns about the geometry of the main roundabout and whether there is a case for saying that some of the improvement works are actually not necessarily essential. Do you remember, what I think is common ground is that there is clearly a need to improve the movement westwards out of A500, and then either across the road to the motorway or turning left onto the A519 Newcastle Road? So we are proposing that there should be a dedicated left turn lane there, and it is not suggested that that is anything other than a perfectly sensible proposal.

247. What is suggested is that it may not be necessary to have the same arrangement on the other side of the roundabout where one’s turning in and out of the A51 Clayton Road to the north. I am quite happy to say that HS2 will keep that point under review, and if that means that one is able to provide a little more room on the south side of the roundabout, so as to address the concern about visibility splay, and the geometry point that I think was touched on as well, then that would be an obvious way of taking the detailed design forward.

248. I can’t say that we will definitely not provide those improvements that you see identified as permanent segregated left turn filter lanes on either side of the northern arm of the roundabout, because again, both Highways England and Staffordshire County Council are keen to see those put in place to improve traffic flow. But I see no reason not to review that and to discuss that –

249. THE CHAIR: That seems perfectly reasonable. I do not think the Committee
would push you any further.

250. MR MOULD QC (DfT): As regards crossing, plainly if, during the course of this process of improving the operation of this interchange for people in cars, and lorries, and other vehicles, one can do something to improve the environment for pedestrians so that they can actually get across the road without having to take their lives into their hands, which is the point I think that is made, then obviously it is right that appropriate efforts should be able to do that. Whether that would entail the provision of a bridge is again something that one would need to think about carefully, but certainly, if it were possible to provide, at an appropriate location that actually is of some utility to pedestrians, a controlled pedestrian crossing, perhaps a little closer to the roundabout on its approach from Stoke, but not so close as to impact on the function of a very busy roundabout, then that is something that should continue to be reviewed, and our assurances made clear that we will continue to discuss that very intently with Highways England and the county council.

251. There are two highways authorities involved here, to see whether, as part of the development of the detail, we can find an appropriate location that is acceptable to them and then helps to ease that route from Newcastle Road to the services and the other amenities that were mentioned a moment ago.

252. So, I hope it is in summary, it is a reasonably positive message, and certainly the assurances that we have shown you are designed to set out the basis for moving forward in a way that we hope will allow a measure of reassurance to these petitioners and things to develop to some degree, to their liking.

253. THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Mould, I am grateful. I think we did give you a right to appear, or agree with your right to appear, I think it has been very useful. Is there anything you want to come back on?

254. MS MORRIS-GOOSTREY: Yes, just to summarise, if I could ask for exhibit A471(1)? And this picture was taken on a Saturday, not a particularly busy Saturday, although it was a nice sunny day, 12.15 in the afternoon. There was a broken down vehicle outside my house, and this is the mayhem that it caused, and there wasn’t an HGV in sight. This was just to summarise, you can see exactly what has happened there. It’s stacking right back everywhere, just to get past one broken down vehicle
outside my house.

255. THE CHAIR: Thanks very much. We’ll now move to the next petitioner, RJ and MA Bloor. Thank you for petitioning. Over to you.

Submissions by Mr Richard Bloor and Mrs Michelle Bloor

256. MR BLOOR: Thank you very much. I’m Richard, I’m here with my wife, Michelle. We’re not representing anybody other than ourselves today. In the sake of time, Henry, if I could ask you just to go through the slides in the serial fashion. With this particular exhibit, I just wanted to show whereabouts Glebe House is located.

257. So we’re just to the north of Swynnerton, gone on too quickly. We are approximately 300 metres away from the line, and our home comprises of a house, which is our family home for myself, my wife, my two children. We have a paddock for a couple of dogs and horses. Tittensor Road is our main access from the house to the village and the local amenities. Next slide, please.

258. In the recent exchange, I was asked why we didn’t petition earlier. Back in March, we received a nice letter to say that our – this was at a recent exchange, by the way, with some people from HS2. The reason we didn’t petition earlier, because we had a nice letter to say that our property was required under the safeguarding, or part of the property was required, so we went down the statutory blight route. Unfortunately, that got rejected, and here we sit today. Next slide, please.

259. The reasons for the petition is that under the current revisions, the compound as you can see, has been extended significantly so it now encroaches on Tittensor Road, as you see here. It is difficult for me to highlight the property any more clearly with all the other indications on HS2 maps, but I am obviously very concerned – we are both very concerned with the proximity of the compound to our home.

260. Obviously the promoter wants to use Tittensor Road, and the realigned Tittensor Road, which are both small lanes that have restrictions for vehicles of 7.5 tonnes. As you can see by my final comment on that slide, HS2 confirmed that there is no plans for road widening.

261. Also, the slide is slightly misleading because the realigned Tittensor Road, which
is indicated here, this won’t be built until Q3 2023. Next slide, please.

262. So from the community area part – the system is on the go-slow today. The point is looking at the community area part, volume two, CA3, that Tittensor Road will – the realigned Tittensor Road will not open until the end of Q2; we’re looking at the fourth line down here. So, until that period, the existing roads will obviously be used. I will come on to the point I’m making on that on the next couple of slides, but if you go to the next slide, please.

263. So our objective today: I would like to minimise the risk and disruption for our day-to-day lives living at home during the construction phase. I would like to see the flow of construction traffic restricted from passing Glebe House and going on to the junctions outside of Swynnerton. I would also like to see the compound moved within the Bill limits. Next slide, please.

264. THE CHAIR: Can I just check you haven’t ruled out – you’re talking all about mitigation at the moment, but I think you referred to purchase earlier on, you thought you were in a purchase scenario. I just want to be clear, if a purchase scenario was on the table, would that be your preference?

265. MR BLOOR: Under the blight conditions, yes. We have discussed with a couple of representatives from HS2 about the atypical schemes, but obviously from a financial point of view, that wouldn’t work for us, so we have decided to stay where we are.

266. THE CHAIR: So under no circumstances you want us to look at your inclusion –

267. MR BLOOR: No.

268. THE CHAIR: Can I just confirm, when you say, ‘Not at the moment’, because we, as a Committee, only have one shot at this, and I am happy with not considering that.

269. MRS BLOOR: For us to go on to the atypical, it meant that we would be able to park it, and we would be doing that through HS2.

270. THE CHAIR: Do you want to join us? Is that okay? I want to make sure that we are getting the right thing, right information and doing the best by you.
271. MRS BLOOR: Yes. We served a blight notice last year to HS2 and it was refused. And the next step then was the atypical scheme. We looked into things a little bit and we just cannot afford to go on the atypical scheme because it would be stamp duty, moving costs, finding a property similar to what we have got would probably be another £100,000. We had to make the decision of – we’ve had six years of not knowing what we are doing, do we just make the decision ourselves, that we can’t afford to move?

272. THE CHAIR: I’ll let you go on with the mitigation, but if I can ask HS2 to identify what schemes might be available, if we were to direct the Secretary of State in regard to this. All options can then be on the table, if the Committee consider those appropriate. So you have got the mitigation route, and anything else that the Committee see appropriate. I didn’t want to close that off as an option to you.

273. MR BLOOR: That’s absolutely fine.

274. THE CHAIR: Equally, I don’t want to push you down that option. So let’s now look at mitigation entirely.

275. MR BLOOR: Yes, but as Michelle has said, we’ve had six years of uncertainty and after the blight notice was rejected, we said, ‘Okay, let’s stay where we are and make the most of it’. It’s quite a unique property. It is a very old property, and as we said, we’d struggle to find something similar actually, and that is why we said, ‘Okay, let’s go through this process and see how far it gets us’.

276. THE CHAIR: Okay, yes.

277. MR BLOOR: So, anyway, as I’ve highlighted about the construction route and the dates when the new road will start, the two maps in front, one is HS2’s document from – their map books for their transport and traffic. It’s a little bit strange to follow, because it’s out of order, but you’ll see in the first section for the civil works, it begins in October 20, and you can see the daily use of vehicles.

278. Now the reason I am highlighting this is because at this period in time, the realigned Tittensor Road, which is running along here, won’t exist. So Tittensor Road and Stab Lane could potentially be used. Next slide, please.
279. And as you can see here, the utility works start quite early on, along with the site preparation and setup. Tittensor Road closure, the road on which we live, doesn’t actually happen, as you can see there, until beginning of Q2, 2023. Next slide, please.

280. So, this is the view standing outside my house in the first photograph. You can see it is a very narrow lane. There is no plan to widen it, there are no footpaths. Today, as Michelle travels up and down when she sees fit to take the horse out, I use it to take the dogs, it’s is the route that the children walk to, to get the bus to school. It is where we go to the Post Office. There is no other route that we can use. You can see there, there is a single car, not an HGV, so you can imagine what that road would look like with two HGVs, and the two of us using it for pedestrian access. So that is looking north back towards Swynnerton.

281. The second photograph there is looking from Swynnerton back towards Glebe House. I highlighted Stab Lane, because it is a very, very tight junction. It is a very acute angle. You can see even with a light goods vehicle, he’s already on the wrong side of the road and if he was turning north onto Tittensor Road, you would end up on the wrong side of the road. It is completely inappropriate for construction traffic. Next slide, please.

282. I contacted the local Staffordshire Highways, Sarah Mallen. She is the HS2 project manager for Staffordshire Highways. Her first comment back to me was that they agree with all the points I made in the petition. She went on to say that the increase in both HGVs and HS2 vehicles, include workers, will increase the traffic levels and type to an extent that would not be considered safe.

283. They also went on to say they have concerns about HS2 using Tittensor Road, as set out in AP2 which need to be addressed, and they also agree that Stab Lane, Tittensor Road junction is completely inappropriate for turning vehicles of that magnitude. Next slide, please.

284. So based on feedback from Highways – are you struggling? I do need the slide to make the point.

285. THE CHAIR: We will wait for the information. Thanks for bearing with us.
286. MR BLOOR: No problem at all. I have put together two proposals. The first one, because the information from the Highways, the location of the compound was obviously planned there, assuming that HS2 could access that area from Tittensor Road. My first proposal was to ask if the compound can be moved within the Bill limits. I’ve shaded a green area which, under the existing AP, as a provision for another utility compound.

287. The benefits of moving it to that location is it’s very close to the A51 which is a major route has no issues in passing HGVs. Second point to my proposal would be to utilise the area designated for the existing compound for material store. Speaking to the engineers when they start excavating into the cutting, which is the 30-metre cutting, there is quite a lot of material going to come out of there. It is going to be graded and stored to provide a nice barrier, rather than fencing and other forms of hoarding. I suggested that they stockpile the material there, grassed it over, leave it there for seven years, it would provide a good barrier for noise and various of the points that we’d rather not see coming across the fence.

288. The third point is direct signage. I am a pragmatist myself, I know in an ideal world, the contractors would probably use, or follow the guidelines, but as we all know, when people are under stress, things happen and I would like to see some signage erected that would actually prevent the contractors from passing any further south on the road. Next slide, please.

289. I discussed my proposal with Sarah from the Highways and she said that – she gave me some good advice. She explained what this Committee was like and she said to have a back-up proposal. If HS2 were not prepared to move the compound to the location I first indicated, she suggested that, ‘Again, if you’re unsuccessful, we request that the existing compound, the layout be changed slightly, thus to allow the compound to be accessed further north on Tittensor Road’, these are Sarah’s words, and that’s obviously going to mitigate, if you like, the construction vehicles passing my front door.

290. My proposal number two is to use this second shaded green area, reconfigure the compound, and she also confirmed that I was quite – she was quite happy for me to use this response to confirm that Staffordshire Highways would be content for the compound to be reconfigured to allow alternative access. Next slide, please.
291. This shows the promoter’s response to my neighbour. As we have seen from some of the other petitions, the yellow lines indicate haul routes. So you can see from my two proposals actually, whether the HS2 agree and move the compound just to further north, or whether they move it, as I have indicated in my second proposal. Both proposals still gain access from the existing haul roads, and in my opinion, would not increase the cost or the environmental aspects of this proposal, but would benefit myself and my wife, and the residents of Glebe House, and that we would not have a compound siting on our door.

292. We know what the ground is like in the area, every year through the harvest season, we know where the prevailing winds come from. I know that there is a very nice report on the environmental statement, but living there for 10 years, we know what will happen, we know what the soil is like.

293. THE CHAIR: Shall we hear HS2 and then give you the opportunity to come back?

294. MR BLOOR: Thank you very much.

295. THE CHAIR: Hopefully, they’ll provide some reassurance or comfort. Mr Mould.

Response from Mr Mould

296. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Shall I deal with the mitigation first and then I’ll answer your question about the –

297. THE CHAIR: Perfect.

298. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Can we just go to P1409(5). So Glebe House, a range of compounds and stockpiling areas in that triangle, formed by the existing Tittensor Road and the realigned road, leading up to that roundabout that you will recall you asked us to provide the new junction between the realigned road and the A51. Now the AP2 addition, of course, is to put in this utility compound, which is just wrapping around closest to the petitioner’s property, which is being shown with the arrow now.

299. The first concern is about traffic in the first stage of construction coming down
Tittensor Road, HS2 construction traffic coming down Tittensor Road and causing problems for the petitioners at Glebe House. The reason I put this slide up is that HS2’s route team is now in the process of reviewing the detail of the access point onto that construction area as a whole, from Tittensor Road, whilst the existing road is still in use. The intention is to provide that access point somewhat to the east of the petitioner’s property. You can see the red line marking the outline of Glebe House and the blue arrow is showing where HS2 is now looking to get the access in. We have got to make sure we can run the yellow haul road as well, but that is the proposal.

300. Indeed on the statutory plans which form AP2, there is an A marking at that point on the plan, which is the notation for where, on the Parliamentary plans, the access is proposed to be installed. So, on that basis, whilst Tittensor Road, in its current alignment is still in use by the public, by Mr and Mrs Bloor to get to and from their house, but also by HS2 construction, the latter cohort of vehicles, the HS2 vehicles, on our plans, they should stop well short of Glebe House.

301. Now of course, they will be on Tittensor Road coming down from the junction with the A51, and then that stretch across the railway line and then into the work site, but they will not get as far as Glebe House on this proposal.

302. Once Tittensor Road has been realigned, then obviously all traffic, including HS2 traffic, will then be coming through the new roundabout, coming to and from Swynnerton down the realigned road. HS2 then would find access to its worksites for the remaining part of the construction programme from that realigned road. It would not need to come down to that very sharp junction which was pointed out to you at Stab Lane, or actually, a bit further down. That is not part of HS2’s proposed construction routing.

303. If you break the construction phase down into two broad tranches; firstly the first half, if you like, when we are using the existing Tittensor Road, and the second half when we replace that with the new one, for each of those phases, HS2 is looking to provide access to its worksites from a point that is either east of the petitioner’s property, or north and east on the realigned road.

304. There is no proposal to bring any significant quantity of HS2 vehicles down, westwards of those two points. There is no intention to bring vehicles. Indeed, I don’t
believe that it would be possible for any significant construction lorries to make that very sharp turn. I gather it will need to be, so far as we do some work to it, it will need to be designed so that the refuse vehicle can get round the corner to come and serve Glebe House.

305. THE CHAIR: How about moving it further to the north?

306. MR MOULD QC (DfT): The reason I put that point first – I will come to that now, but the reason I put those points to you is because, on that basis, we understand that the key concern which is traffic past the house, that that concern will be substantially alleviated. The problem with moving it north, if we go to A463(12), the first proposal – actually, I think it is probably east – the problem with moving it to the point that you see here, I can see the logic of the petitioner’s thinking, but that compound is designed to serve the diversion of a very high pressure gas main, which is running across the HS2 line and the broad route of that is indicated by the fact that you can see the sort of rectangular column of red shaded land, which goes beyond where the green circle has been put, and goes eastwards. That is the line of this subterranean high pressure gas pipeline that needs to be diverted to allow for HS2 to construct the railway, and also to carry out the road works.

307. If we put the compound that is designed to serve that diversion job on top of the existing pipeline, you can see the difficulties of actually doing the job in question in the first place. That is the same point, I am afraid, with the alternative location. It is too close to the existing pipeline to be an obvious alternative solution.

308. What I can say to you is that there is a lot of construction activity, there is a lot of storage activity going on within the triangle adjacent – between the two stop markings, and there will obviously be the opportunity during the detailed design and settlement of those compounds to fine-tune, to refine the location of compounds to try and ensure that we keep the impact on neighbours, particularly Glebe House, to the minimum.

309. What we want to try and do is to draw the balance between compounds which are generating noise which could cause disturbance that way compound, and mounds of material that is being stockpiled, which could generate dust and so obviously would keep further away.
310. THE CHAIR: Sandy.

311. MR MARTIN: Yes. Mr Mould, on this particular map, you can see the green dotted line which shows the routes that will be used for construction vehicles. There is a green dotted line going in both directions from the original entrance. There will, presumably, still be some construction traffic, wherever your entrance to the compound.

312. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Very, very limited indeed. It is genuinely residual, and I believe we can give an assurance which confirms that, both during the first half of construction, the use of the existing road, and during the second half, the realigned, we can give an assurance to the petitioners which confirms that the great majority of construction traffic will be routed so that it accesses that construction area before it reaches their property. And there will be a very residual need to get access to what will ultimately be, I think, an autotransformer feeder station and a balancing pond adjacent to their property, but that will be of the order of a very few vehicles a year.

313. That is my response to that. In a sense, I can sum up by saying by managing the traffic and the accesses in the way that I have laid out to you, and which is shown on that slide P1409(5) we looked at earlier, the intention is to avoid the need to do what might be quite disruptive to the efficient carrying out of the work, which is shifting that pipeline, when you have got the compound right on top of it.

314. Mitigation, now I move to compensation.

315. THE CHAIR: Very briefly, I’m conscious – I don’t want to go back on things that we did discuss.

316. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Part of the petitioner’s property was included within safeguarding because of the need to do some utility works. They served the blight notice as they were entitled to do. When push came to shove and the question – that raised the question, does the Secretary of State want to buy their property or not, to do the works? The Secretary of State looked at the plans and said, ‘I don’t need to buy their property. If I need to go onto their land temporarily, I can do it under my powers of temporary access, and therefore I shall not accept the blight notice, and I shall leave them with their property’.
317. You asked the question, what are the remedies available in circumstances where the Secretary of State, ‘I am not going to buy you’, and they were to say hereafter, ‘We’d like the Secretary of State to consider buying it’, there would be two possible routes. One is the Need to Sell scheme where they would need to show a compelling reason to sell, and as they have indicated to you, they would ordinarily only expect to receive the open market value of their property, they wouldn’t receive stamp duty and they wouldn’t receive the statutory home loss payment, or the costs of moving and that kind of thing.

318. The alternative is to say, ‘We have special reasons to have an offer from the Secretary of State to buy us, at open market value, but with either some or all of the additional payments that would come with statutory purchase, statutory compulsory purchase, such as home loss disturbance and including stamp duty’.

319. That would be under what you know as the exceptional circumstances, or the special circumstances regime. They would have to make a case to the Secretary of State under our policies to say why their case is sufficiently special that he should both buy them, but do it on effectively compulsory purchase terms.

320. THE CHAIR: Very clear, thank you. Mr Bloor, you don’t need to take any more time, I think everything’s been said, but if you have got anything you want to say, this is your opportunity?

321. MR BLOOR: I just want to make a final point regarding the location of the compound. In my opinion, it’s just a matter of scheduling the whole area. There is not just the gas pipe, there is water, there is electricity, and it is just a case of scheduling. I don’t accept that the compound needs to be where it is. If you look at the grey hatched area, it’s specific for the rail systems.

322. To me, as just a practical man, I can’t see – if I was doing a building job in my garden, I wouldn’t get a delivery in my neighbour’s garden, I’d have it put next to where I’m going to use it. So, the rail systems compound being so far away from the line makes no sense to me. As I say, I understand the points about the utilities, but that is just a matter of scheduling.

323. THE CHAIR: Mr Mould, you want to come in?
324. MR MOULD QC (DfT): I was just going to say, that last point about flexibility, fine-tuning, scheduling, in principle, I entirely accept and we can certainly look to work with the petitioners to try to ensure that we take account of their points on that as the detailed layout of the construction sites are put forward.

325. MR BLOOR: Thank you.

326. THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. I normally come to the next petitioner. I will take your guidance, Mr Mould; is there a short statement?

327. MR MOULD QC (DfT): There is.

328. THE CHAIR: Excellent.

329. MR MOULD QC (DfT): It’s P1482 if you’d like me to read it out.

330. THE CHAIR: Sorry, Mr Bloor. Thank you very much.

331. MR BLOOR: Thank you.

332. THE CHAIR: We’re trying to cram in things at the last minute. Thank you for petitioning.

Statement from Mr Mould

333. MR MOULD QC (DfT): I don’t need to remind the Committee of where Mr and Mrs Keith and Gillian Ralwls live; they’re actually on the other side of the A51, just to the east of the previous petitioner’s property at Long Compton Farm. The statement is as follows:

334. I’d like to read out for the record an agreed statement on behalf of Keith and Gillian Ralwls, petition AP2(14) who will not be appearing today. You may recall that Mr and Mrs Ralwls are the owners of Long Compton Farm to the north of Swynnerton, and immediately to the north of the A51. They appeared before you last June seeking a roundabout to be provided at the junction of the Tittensor Road and the A51 rather than the T-junction proposed in the Bill.

335. The issue was covered in your second special report last year and in its response, the promoter undertook to include a roundabout in the second additional provision to the
Bill. Mr and Mrs Ralwls petitioned against that roundabout proposal saying that, whilst it was a significant improvement on the T-junction, they felt that a better solution would be to move the eye of the roundabout about 30 metres further north of the position proposed in AP2.

336. Following engagement with Mr and Mrs Ralwls, most recently a meeting at their home on 4 April of this year, the promoter has given Mr and Mrs Ralwls an assurance that it will use reasonable endeavours to move the roundabout further to the north and/or west of its current position, subject to obtaining any additional land or consents which may be required.

337. Separately to their AP2 petition, Mr and Mrs Ralwls have reiterated their desire to move from Long Compton Farm at the earliest opportunity. On 25 April 2019, the promoter spoke to Miss Parry of Pinsent and Parry, Mr or Mrs Ralwls’ land agent, to advise that the next step would be for Mr or Mrs Ralwls to submit a blight notice and a request for their secondary hereditament to be acquired under atypical circumstances.

338. Once submitted, the promoter would consider any such requests as expeditiously as possible. Unless you would like me to, I won’t not explain the significance of the term head of hereditament in that statement itself. It is a technical term meaning that they have a second residence on their property.

339. THE CHAIR: That concludes today’s public business. The Committee will now sit in private.