

MINUTES OF ORAL EVIDENCE

taken before

HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMITTEE

On the

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Wednesday 27 January 2016

In Committee Room 5

PRESENT:

Mr Robert Syms (Chair)
Sir Henry Bellingham
Sir Peter Bottomley
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown
Mr Mark Hendrick

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr James Strachan QC, Counsel, Department for Transport

WITNESSES

Dr Gill Lewis
Mr John Doidge
Mr Ken Blanch
Mr Russell Taroni
Mr David Halsey
Ms Sarah Hussain
Mr John Timperley

IN PUBLIC SESSION

INDEX

Subject	Page
<u>Hampton-in Arden Parish Council and Society</u>	
Submissions by Dr Lewis	3
Submissions by Mr Blanch	8
Submissions by Mr Doidge	12
Response from Mr Strachan	17
Closing submissions by Dr Lewis, Mr Blanch and Mr Doidge	24
<u>Elizabeth and Graham Juniper</u>	
Submissions by Dr Lewis	26
<u>The George Fentham Hampton-in-Arden Charity</u>	
Submissions by Dr Lewis	28
Response from Mr Strachan	29
<u>Taroni Metals</u>	
Statement read by Mr Strachan	30
<u>Hampton-in-Arden Action Group</u>	
Submissions by Mr Halsey	31
Submissions by Ms Hussain	38
Submissions by Mr Timperley	40
Further submissions by Mr Halsey	42
Response from Mr Strachan	46
Closing submissions by Mr Halsey	49

(at 09.30)

1. CHAIR: Order, order. Welcome to the HS2 Select Committee. We start off today with AP2 23, AP4 27, AP2 36, AP4 28, Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council with Dr Gill Lewis, Kenneth Blanche and John Doidge. Who's going to kick off?

Hampton-in Arden Parish Council and Society

2. DR LEWIS: I'm going to kick off. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you today on behalf of the 1,900 residents of the parish of Hampton-in-Arden. We are here to talk about additional provision to, principally, the proposed realignment of Diddington Road, and additional provision for, principally, the relocation of the Bickenhill Waste Centre, but also about unresolved issues from our previous appearance.

3. I am Dr Gill Lewis and I've been Chair of Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council for six years, and my colleagues with me are John Doidge, a retired University Director, and Ken Blanche, who is a retired Chartered Civil Engineer specialising in design and construction of highways and railways, and of particular interest is Ken's three years, during which he worked on the detailed design and construction of the Ashford section of High Speed 1.

4. John and Ken are also trustees, and John the Vice Chair of the Hampton-in-Arden Society, which is a registered charity with the aims of promoting high standards of planning and architecture, and to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of interest in Hampton-in-Arden. And for your convenience today, we've combined both our presentations.

5. Other petitioners in the village will be appearing later on, and the Parish Council, Hampton Society, and the residents all agree on the major issues that we're talking about, but I'm sure the residents will have their own particular observations to make.

6. I'd like to mention, before I start, a survey of opinions that took place in the village concerning High Speed 2 in 2011, which showed that 97% of respondents were against High Speed 2, and as a result of this, the Parish Council cast a resolution to oppose the scheme, because of the lasting detrimental effect it would have upon the

village, asking for thorough government review, which, as far as I'm aware, hasn't taken place.

7. Despite this, the Parish Council – our approach to negotiations with High Speed 2 and other agencies has always been to provide options for improvement, and for mitigation. Solutions, rather than unproductive opposition. It has already been noted by this Committee that some of our suggestions, particularly coming from Ken has saved High Speed 2 considerable amounts of money.

8. Our previous appearance in front of the Select Committee took place in December 2014, when your Chair, Mr Syms, kindly said, and I quote, 'If there are unresolved problems, we should feel free to come back and inform the Committee. There will be time to call us back'. And it's for that reason I wrote to Mr Syms 12 July 2015 concerning the lack of progress that we felt we'd made on many of our issues with High Speed 2. We've not received a detailed reply to this letter in the intervening seven months, but have been told by Mr Caulfield that the issues would be dealt with at this appearance.

9. During our 2014 appearance, Mr Mould, speaking for High Speed 2 promised that the following issues would be reviewed and discussed with the Parish Council and Hampton Society within weeks. It might help now – we've got slide – we've got the relevant slide in front of us. So, he promised a review of the use of the residential portion of Diddington Lane, and the B4102 Meriden Road as haul routes.

10. Coming back, where there's limited amount of traffic is reasonable. We've had no feedback. The positioning of spoil heaps and work camps adjacent to Diddington Lane properties, which is shown on this slide. One small area of spoil has been relocated from immediately behind the back garden to a bit further behind the back garden, but in general, the spoil heaps remain where they were. So, we have had no satisfaction on that.

11. We suggested that the spoil heaps and the work camps should be positioned to the east of the trace to keep traffic away from the village, and avoid crossing Patrick's bridge, which is only 5.5 meters wide. And also, the construction camps should be moved to the east so that they're not in the flood plain. We were thinking that if they were left in the flood plain, they could be restored as a boating lane for the village

afterwards.

12. Mr Mould committed to engaging with the community in the detailed design of the Blythe viaduct within weeks, but no news on that. And lastly, the issue of Diddington Lane re-alignment, which we're covering in the remainder of this petition.

13. We detail these issues again in our APT petition, and were surprised to read in the promoter's response document that since they are not associated with the proposed amendments in AP2, they have nothing more to say on the issues. We find this process quite exasperating, and the promoter appears to be hiding behind the process that's denying access for any further dialogue on the issues, and we feel we deserve better, and we'd like to have a response on these issues before we move on today, if possible.

14. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): I see. Sorry, are you inviting me to respond now?

15. CHAIR: Have you actually finished everything?

16. DR LEWIS: I've finished that section.

17. CHAIR: No, I think you should go through everything you want to say, and then we'll have the response.

18. MR HENDRICK: You mentioned issues that were raised in December 2014, but not said what those issues were.

19. DR LEWIS: I have mentioned – would you like me to go through them again?

20. CHAIR: No. Stick to what you were going to say, and go through the other issues, and then we'll get a response at the end. That's the easiest way of doing it. Thank you, Doctor.

21. DR LEWIS: Okay, thank you. So, if we come on to AP2, Diddington Lane realignment, in my letter of 12 July, I also raised this issue, now subject to AP2. The Committee will recall that in the hybrid bill, this residential country lane was scheduled to be closed as a through route, maintaining access from either end for farmers, and for railway maintenance. It would be retained as a green route, and bridal way for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. And there were a large number of reasons enumerated in the original bill why this should be case. This was a plan that the community had signed up

to and agreed through every consultation event since 2010. It offered small compensation for the effect described by High Speed 2, under Diddington Lane Properties, which was classified in the Environmental Statement as being permanent and significant. But the properties were not part of any statutory compensation scheme.

22. It was also felt to be a positive mitigation step to allay fears that the village would be used as a rat run to the interchange station, which is just north of Stone Bridge roundabout. Just 24 hours before we appeared in front of your Committee in 2014, High Speed announced that it has reached a last minute agreement with Packington Estate to retain Diddington Lane as a through route. No consultation has occurred with the community, the Parish Council, or the Hampton Society.

23. The timeline of events surrounding the agreement is important. In Spring 2015, High Speed 2 announced that a though route could not be achieved on the current alignment for reasons which will be explained later on. At the time, both Packington Estate and the village met and we all felt we were unhappy regarding the major nature of the proposed new road. And following talks between the three groups, and the highway authority, we wrote a joint letter to High Speed 2 on 24 March 2015 stating that our preferred option of all three parties, was for Diddington Lane to remain open, but on its current alignment.

24. Notwithstanding, on 10 July, a technical agreement was signed between Packington Estate and High Speed 2 to keep Diddington Lane open to through traffic. Now, if we look at this agreement, Clause 321 contains a condition to the effect that the agreement is dependent on the successful promotion of the amendment to the bill. It's this successful promotion of AP2 that we, and the 30 other petitioners in the village are challenging.

25. In addition, again, Clause 322 of the agreement, there's a second condition requiring the inclusion of a supplemental environmental statement of an assessment of the significant environmental effects of any diversion. We, again, challenge the agreement with Packington Estate on the grounds that this assessment has not been completed to an adequate standard by High Speed 2 regarding the effects of AP2 on the community.

26. In Environmental Statement 3 that goes along with AP2, many of the effects are

assumed to be unchanged, and no additional work has been done, particularly relating to noise, air quality and traffic volumes in Diddington Lane and the village as a whole.

27. We also challenge the agreement on the grounds that the Department for Transport have signed a legal agreement with Packington Estate before public consultation had taken place by way of AP2, and in effect, consultation has been rendered futile because an agreement has been signed before the consultation.

28. So, for these three reasons, we maintain that a review of the validity of the legal agreement with Packington Estate should be looked at.

29. Hampton-in-Arden is an ancient village and the main road through it, B4102, is not a modern standard road. It's narrow with insubstantial pavements, as you will see in the various photographs that people will be showing you later on. The church and 16 almshouses and the recreation ground where children go for various clubs and sports are on the opposite side of the road, of this main road, from the school, the pharmacy, the library, the doctor's surgery, the shops and many houses, and even now, the traffic flow through the village makes crossing the road, or negotiating with mobility scooters from the almshouses all with trams, very dangerous at times.

30. Our valuable local knowledge leads us to believe that if Diddington Lane remains open to through traffic, the 5% increase in traffic flow, which is suggested by High Speed 2, in the information pack they sent out for today, is a huge underestimate. So, for this reason, or these reasons, the closing of Diddington Lane to through traffic remains a preferred option of the Parish Council, the Hampton Society and many village residents.

31. However, as we always have, we continue with dialogue to achieve the best possible outcome, if the lane must remain open.

32. In September 2015, Caroline Spelman organised a petition, which has since been presented to Parliament, which carried 742 names of parishioners and they were supporting her plan, or her idea to reinstate Diddington Lane as a green route whilst retaining access only for farmers and other land owners. We still await the outcome of this petition.

33. Following written deposition by the village of a possible engineer's solutions, which would allow the retention of the existing alignment and a fall back option of less invasive alternative road alignment to that proposed in AP2. Your petitioners and Caroline Spelman met with representatives of High Speed 2 at their offices in Birmingham on 23 October.

34. Crucially, it was at this meeting that we requested a review of the positioning of switch and crossing units, and the design of the track bed approaching the station in relation to the crossing of Diddington Lane.

35. It's here that I hand over to my colleague Ken Blanche, who will explain the technicalities of the track work layout, and the various highway options, which have been discussed with High Speed 2. And could I just also mention that the AP2 proposition, 13 hectares of high quality arable land would be lost, and the suggested cost of the realignment would be £2 million. Ken?

36. MR BLANCH: Okay thank you. Prior to the October meeting that we had with HS2, an ex-colleague of mine who's a railway engineer and, in discussion, we thought that we ought to look at where the turnouts and crossovers are located on the approach to the station from the south side. These are usually positioned to allow trains to be switched to various other platforms, and the conclusion of that discussion was that we believe that particularly the crossover, which allows trains to go from the up line to the down line, could be moved. Its current location is right over the online at Diddington Lane, which justified an additional structural depth, should it still be there. The structural depth, or the pavement of the crossings has to be rigid throughout the length of the crossing, otherwise there's severe danger of derailment and the like. But if you could actually remove the crossing from the bridge, you could then remove that additional structural depth that's required.

37. So, we put that forward as an option at that October meeting, together with three other alignments that I had developed that would save land take and also money in their development. Subsequent to that, if the detailed response from HS2 regarding the track work issues – they set out details as to why the turnouts needed to be in their location; why the crossover needed to be in those locations, but they didn't actually offer any explanation as to how flexible they were to being moved. We're less worried about the

turnouts. It's the crossover that is the crucial one. We still maintain that you could move that.

38. But the meeting that we had about two, or three weeks ago with HS2, following their report that they conducted, it was concluded in that, and we accepted it, that an online Diddington Lane solution for the through route would no longer be feasible. The road crossing would have to be lowered, and that would increase the flood risk, so it was generally accepted that that was no longer a viable option.

39. But the good news out of that meeting was – we had put forward Option 2, which was a tighter alignment to that suggested by HS2 Limited, and they have agreed to adopt that and work with us, and with Solihull – the highway authority – to develop that scheme further, if the through route is ultimately chosen.

40. Excuse me. So, moving on, our petition is actually to propose a green route for Diddington Lane, and close it to through traffic, leaving it only open to emergency vehicles and agricultural vehicles, and cyclists etc, but not to the general through traffic.

41. There is a precedence for this, just for information, on HS1. Godinton Road, which is in middle of Ashford, was closed, and replaced with a single lane bridge, which is controlled by rising bollards, and again, is only open to emergency vehicles. So, we're quite happy with that.

42. Now, just to move on to the justification for the green route, as Dr Lewis has said, Hampton is quite a small village, we get narrow streets. Could we have the first image, please? This is the photograph. That's the one. This is at the top end of the village, which is remote from where the HS2 crossing is, but it demonstrates the narrowness of the road, the narrowness of the footways. Just in front you, the road bears sharply to the right. That is actually quite an awkward turn with buses and HGVs coming that way. So, you know, it's a narrow road and foot way.

43. If you'd like to put the next image up, please? That's the one. This is the northern end where Diddington Lane exits onto the A452. It's – you can see the flyover in the distance. That's Stone Bridge Roundabout with the A45. Diddington Lane joins 75 meters before the Give Way line at the roundabout. This roundabout is subject to extensive re-design as part of HS2 proposals. It needs the extra capacity because the

new station is not that far to the north. It is being proposed to have dedicated left lanes on all four legs, also a dedicated right turn for southbound traffic turning to the west. It will be signal controlled, so HS2 have done everything that they can to maximise the capacity for this junction and that's quite correct, and that's the primary purpose.

44. Unfortunately, Diddington Lane joins this very close, as you can see from the image. Now, at present, the A452 is 60 mile-an-hour speed limits. Traffic comes along there very quick. It tends to do the formula one trick of breaking at the last minute for the roundabout. So, as you're trying to get out of Diddington Lane, it's still moving quite fast in front of you.

45. Now, that left turn is not too bad if you're going just into the first lane, and you're either going to go northwards, or westwards, but if you want to get into the right hand lane to turn east towards Coventry, it's awkward at best, but quite honest, at times, it's downright dangerous. The existing condition is also complicated in that there's a central reserve just to your right, which is paved and is used as an emergency crossing for emergency vehicles. Unfortunately, back in October, one of our residents – we've long suspected that agricultural vehicles make this illegal turn, and one of our residents went out there and counted over 50 in one day coming from the right hand side of that photograph as you see it, crossing the central reserve in front of the oncoming northbound traffic. Now, there were no incidents, but unfortunately, a few weeks later, there was a fatality of a private car that tried to do the same manoeuvre. This has all been reported to the police and they are actively looking to make this turn totally illegal – well, it's illegal anyway – to actually make it physically impossible.

46. So, that's the existing conditions. When HS2 comes along, we've got this brand new station located about half a mile north of this junction, with its five, or six thousand car parking spaces. Traffic will be generated and travelling to that car park from all point of the compass, including the A452, which is the major southern route. So, you'll have an increase in traffic coming along there on the A452.

47. We also believe that there will be an increase of traffic through the village using Diddington Lane as a rat run, so there will be increased traffic coming out of Diddington Lane.

48. Just as a point of interest, last week, my wife and I were doing our weekly shop.

We went to Knowle, which is located about three miles south west of Hampton, and as we came out of Sainsbury's, although other supermarkets are available, we set the sat nav, just to see what would happen – and we set it for Coleshill, which is a small town located just to the north of the M6, which is due north of here, and I expected to be taken from Knowle. This is the old A41 part of Knowle. I expected to be taken up to the M42, and go that way. But no, we were directed to turn right along Hampton Lane, through the village, and down Diddington Lane. So, good old drivers who blindly follow their sat navs are going to – if Diddington Lane remains open, will inevitably head down that lane.

49. So, we've got increase in traffic in bulk. We can argue about the percentage, but there's increase in traffic on both A452 and Diddington Lane. You have the design for this exchange includes a dedicated left lane from A452 to A45 West and the design that we've seen, that lane starts immediately after where you see that vehicle trying to exit the lane. Now, the effect of those predicated left lanes is traffic no longer has to give way at the roundabout, which will in fact be signal control, and they are completely segregated. You can negotiate those dedicated lanes at 30, 40 miles an hour quite easily. So, there is a considerable increase in the hazard for vehicle collisions at this point.

50. We understand from the promoter that they have not carried out a highway safety audit for Diddington Lane because it's actually an existing lane, and you only really carry them out for new works. But I would suggest that the audit that should have been carried out for this junction should have been extended southwards to include Diddington Lane. We haven't seen a copy of this audit. I will be most interested to see that because it is a requirement that audits are carried out at three stages in highway projects. First one is preliminary design, which is the stage we're out. Second one is detail design, and the third one is post construction.

51. Where are we? Now, following an audit, a highway designer – that audit will have recommendations, and the highway designer generally has three options as far as the risk of the particular hazard. The first option is to try and remove that risk altogether. You can do that by closing Diddington Lane totally, but that would upset Pasture Farm, and it would also upset the small businesses, which exit out there. The second option, if you can't remove the risk is to reduce it. The simple way of reducing

the risk is to reduce the traffic, and you do that by closing Diddington Lane to through traffic. You can't do anything about the extra traffic on A452, but you can reduce the Diddington Lane traffic. The third option that the designer has is to – if you can't remove, or reduce the risk, is to manage it, and the only two options I can come up with that would solve that would be to introduce an additional set of traffic signals before you get to Diddington Lane, but then having sets of signals within 75 metres of one another is not a good idea because the one roundabout will inevitably back up into the other one, and the whole thing breaks down. The third one is slightly more radical – is that if you were to start this dedicated left lane before Diddington Lane, and you force any traffic exiting the lane to actually use that dedicated lane, they would then have to go up to the roundabout and turn west. Now, that would certainly solve the rat run to the new station because motorists would do that once, and they wouldn't do it again. But that is a somewhat more radical way to do it.

52. So, in conclusion, we favour our green route because it reduces the risk of collisions. The extra traffic through the village and lots of elderly residents trying to cross roads in the village.

53. We also feel that the green route would actually satisfy all stakeholders because you control the traffic through smart card gated access; drivers will come up to the gate. They'll use the equivalent of an oyster card to activate the gate. It will open. You drive through and it will close automatically behind you.

54. I think that's probably it. That's the end of my bit. Thank you.

55. DR LEWIS: I think we're moving on to John now.

56. MR BLANCH: I wonder if I might take 30 seconds just to summarise our conclusions on AP2. So, should the maintenance of a through route, even given the new circumstances we've described still be considered necessary by Solihull Council, we seek an assurance from HS2 that proper open and purposeful discussion takes place with the Parish Council and Hampton Society about the other options we have presented, such that a decision finally made is genuinely one of reconciled agreement between all parties, and those most affected. That's the community itself. Thank you.

57. MR DOIDGE: Would you like me to move on to AP4, which is the subject of my

presentation, or would you...

58. CHAIR: No, you do your presentation and we'll get a response from the promoter, please.

59. MR DOIDGE: Okay. The issues are different, of course, between AP2 and AP4. AP4 being the relocation of the Bickenhill waste centre, and I realise that...

60. CHAIR: Do you object to where it is at the moment?

61. MR DOIDGE: I'm sorry?

62. CHAIR: Do you object to where it is at the moment?

63. MR DOIDGE: Where it is at the moment – the plan in AP4 to move it, yes. We are objecting, as petitioners, to the proposal to move it further along the A45.

64. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: The Chairman's question was a slightly different one. Are you happy with where it is at the moment?

65. DR LEWIS: You mean currently, today?

66. MR DOIDGE: It always has been, in my memory, and therefore it is one that we put up with.

67. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: You're used to it?

68. MR DOIDGE: We put up with it. It's there, and that's it. There are issues around the operation of that centre that we take issue with, but – such as dumping in the lane and those kind of things, but that is something that we no control over.

69. CHAIR: The proposal is to move it, but there was a discussion the other day about moving it to another location completely.

70. MR DOIDGE: Indeed there was, and I was going to mention that, if I may, just briefly. This is the Packington Estate Proposal. We have, in fact, met with Packington Estate. We understand their proposal. We listened, of course, to the presentation last week, and we are generally supportive of their offer to move it to a different site – a brownfield site.

71. CHAIR: Okay.

72. MR DOIDGE: And the essence of our petition is that a brownfield site, wherever it may be, would be a far more appropriate solution than the greenfield site, which is currently in a default.

73. CHAIR: Okay

74. MR DOIDGE: I should say that the Hampton Action Group have also petitioned against this, but I understand they will be meeting with you next week on this. So, there is a somewhat disjointed selection of presentations on this. But if I may, Chair, I would like to deal, firstly, with the issue of consultation and the promoter's response. I'll take just a moment, or two, on this. We take exception to the promoter's statement that they disagree with the assertion that no consultation took place. I can tell the Committee that neither the promoter nor Solihull has engaged in any consultation with the Parish Council Community Organisation, or residents, about the relocation. I can say we were made aware – I've put that in inverted commas – at the very end of a meeting on 18 June – a meeting on other issues, that there were some discussions on possible relocation of the waste site. No details were given, no plans, no discussion. We heard nothing more. The promoter then had an opportunity at a general information event on the 19 September to provide information about their discussions with Solihull since, by then, decisions on where relocation was to be must have been well known.

75. AP4 was published just three weeks later. I have to say, our attempt to get information from Solihull was met with equal obfuscation. A wall of silence met every request for information, such that the interpretation one inevitably took was that any decision to move the site may not actually directly affect us. How wrong we were. I'm sure the Committee may regard with equal surprise that a meeting in October called with Ward Councillors and the Leader and Deputy Leader of Solihull and the Chair of Solihull's HS2 Members Working Party, that there was a complete denial of any prior knowledge of the decision. Well, this is at odds with AP4, paragraph 233, which clearly states that consultation with Solihull MBC etc. So, we clearly have a different definition of consultation and that of HS2. Rumour, or an aside, does not constitute consultation.

76. I turn now to the relocation of the waste site itself. The promoter correctly states

the land ear marked is already within the original limits of the bill. However, of this land to build a new waste centre, some 40% larger than the existing will permanently remove this land from the green belt and from productive arable use. We believe a number of perfectly satisfactory alternative brownfield sites exist close to the existing facility, and one such currently used for lorry storage with access along the east way access road on the opposite side of the A45. I think we may have just the map showing the whole area. If we could call that up. It's A20424, A20424 – I understand.

77. I wonder if you could just point out the waste centre, could you? Gill is – just point out the existing, could you? And the proposed is circled in red. I'm sorry.

78. So, access along the east way, access road on the opposite side of the A45. These have very good access off the A45 feeder roads, and are currently described in AP4, VS Volume Environmental Statement Volume 2, as earmarked for incorporation within the A45 east way loop satellite compound, and material stock pile area. Since compounds and stock piles and materials including spoil heaps are temporary in nature, we submit that should it be necessary, those facilities, or spoils could be relocated on the area identified in the new waste site, with a promise that land so affected will be returned to productive and agricultural use, and green belt designation, once rail and road construction has ceased.

79. We now understand, as we've mentioned, that Packington Estate has also petitioned against the resale of the facility and have offered a brownfield site in their ownership already used for mineral extraction and material recycling east along the A45 corridor. It's, at my estimation, somewhere within a mile from the existing site. So, the land is already used for material recycling, so there is a cogent and compelling argument for co-locating these facilities. They are not close to settlements and have access from either side of the A45. In a meeting on the 15 January, the Packington Estate and a representative from Solihull Council registered our support for this, or any alternative proposal on brownfield sites. We found that a more acceptable solution than that currently presented to us, and it would also mitigate, in part, the additional and permanent impact on the Grade II listed Diddington Hall and Farmhouse and Pasture Farmhouse.

80. Incidentally, we note, with surprise that the promoter, in his response, denies any

change in the level of significance of the effects on those properties, or on the environmental effects, and let me just add one more thing. The land in AP4 slopes at some 10 degrees directly to the River Blythe, a designated triple SI along its length.

81. We remain unconvinced that this sensitive river course will be adequately protected from pollution via run off from a recycling waste facility atop its boundaries.

82. I turn now to further concern of residents about the proposed location. The southern boundary of this site juxtaposes with the proposed realignment of the Diddington Lane. Residents believe this is not coincidental and poses an additional threat to the current rural character of the lane in that the new access of Diddington Lane would be both feasible, and arguably desirable to facilitate operations should the A45 become so congested as to make access from the A45 difficult and an alternative access be sought. We find that both alarming, and totally unacceptable.

83. We're similarly unconvinced by the argument presented in AP4 that this permanent relocation is at all necessary. Paragraph 232 states, 'Highway works to the A45, Coventry Road and A45 service road would require minor realignment at the access to the waste centre, which would require the existing access to be raised a time with the raised A45 service road.

84. No evidence, or argument is offered by the promoter, or Solihull to suggest that this minor amendment to the access is unsatisfactory in operational terms of that the current facility could not continue to operate perfectly satisfactorily from the existing site.

85. And finally, I cannot leave this issue without reference to national planning policy guidelines, and Solihull's own local plan relating to the location of waste management facilities. I'll be brief, but the relevant text of the plan is quote in our petition. Policy P12 contains 16 points that Solihull will follow when considering the suitability of sites for waste management facilities. These include restoration of mineral workings, impacts on transport infrastructure, compatibility with neighbouring uses, impact on the green belt, environment and water resources, biodiversity, historic environment and built heritage, impact on amenity and health, including visual intrusion, noise and vibration, litter, odour, vermin and bird attraction.

86. In addition, policy P17 states that the Council will safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land. Development will be permitted only if there is insufficient lower grade land available. Given all this, we do not believe that HS2 and Solihull have followed due diligence in seeking an appropriate solution to this issue, and have gone for an easy option. We urge the Committee to seek from the promoter a review of access arrangements and an assurance that should re-location prove the only viable option, a suitable alternative site will be sourced on brownfield land north of the A45, or elsewhere in the borough, or in accordance with the proposal from Packington Estates.

87. Thank you, Chair.

88. CHAIR: Thank you.

89. DR LEWIS: I think that concludes the points that we wish to raise.

90. CHAIR: Okay. Mr Strachan?

91. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Okay, could I just show you, by way of brief recap, what has been done in this area since the original hybrid bill was proposed by way of seeking to mitigate the effects on the community?

92. If I just show you P1335(1), just to remind the Committee of what was in the hybrid bill for the purposes of construction. P1335(1). It's the next slide. Okay, whilst it's coming on to the system, I hope, you'll recall, under the hybrid bill, that as we pass the Hampton-in-Arden – I'll show you in a minute on screen – we cross the River Blythe, and as part of that, we had a small section of viaduct, 150 metre viaduct, and some embankment works, and as a result of petitions from residents and the Parish Council, amongst others, there was a request to change that part of the infrastructure into a longer viaduct, and one of the key changes made under AP2, which I hope I'll be able to show you – I'll try different slides, see if that helps – P15335(3). Have you got any of those? I don't know if the Committee has it in their packs, but we can resort to paper.

93. DR LEWIS: Is it in the presentation for the Residents Action Group Meeting?

94. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): I think it's just a question of whether it's actually loaded onto the system, but if one turns, in your pack, to...

95. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Say, again, what you were looking for.
96. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): P15335(1) and that was what...
97. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: It's certainly here in our folders. It's behind Term 29.
98. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Yes, it's called Diddington Lane Standard Pack, I think. There are a number of slides – sorry we are resorting to paper, but if we can get it back on screen, we will. But the first slide I was going to show you is of the hybrid Bill during construction and you'll see there that there was some work stockpiles behind Hampton-in-Arden, and under this proposal in the hybrid bill, Diddington Lane was to be stocked up as been described, and behind Hampton-in-Arden, there was a short viaduct of 150 metres crossing the River Blythe, and the next slide is two slides on. It showed you the hybrid bill as proposed – the River Blythe viaduct P15335(3). The River Blythe's viaduct crossed the River Blythe just behind Hampton-in-Arden in the centre of the page.
99. And we responded to various requests to change the landscape visual effects of the scheme in this location, and if you turn immediately on to the AP2 slide in operation – P15335(4) over the page – one of the changes described in detail in the accompanying ES is to extend the viaduct.
100. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: So, you knock up what's called the patch of embankment?
101. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Yes exactly. It's extended from 150 metres to 480 metres. So, responding to a number of concerns. That had the benefit of, so far as the Hampton-in-Arden Parish was concerned, improving the visual outlook, creating some additional landscape continuity underneath the viaduct, greater ecological connectivity and farm accesses.
102. So, I just want to correct any apparent impression there may be that the project has not listened to the residents of the parish in responding to what goes on in this area, there was a very significant change that was achieved through the additional provision.
103. As part of that process, we also have, if I can take you back to the construction

plan for AP2, which is two slides back – P15335(2) – it's the Construction for Additional Provision 2, we have managed to move one of the stockpile areas that was close up to some of the gardens of the Hampton-in-Arden village – has been taken away. We still do have stockpiles and we still do have the River Blythe viaduct satellite compound in the area, but we have been able to take away some of the stockpiles closest to the village.

104. And on the River Blythe satellite compound itself, we have already given an assurance to the environment agency and the Metropolitan Borough Council – Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, to undertake further flood modelling work, and to take that into account in relation to the location of that compound.

105. At the moment, from our flood modelling work, we're quite constrained as to where we do our works to create the viaduct, but we have provided an assurance and we will continue to do that in the detailed design to review the location of that compound, given the concerns from the Parish Council, amongst others as to its location.

106. So, there have been quite significant changes to this area to respond to Hampton-in-Arden. Of course, in relation to what's going on by way of switches and crossings, as the petitioner notes, we have actually responded to their concerns about switches and crossings. I don't know if we can get on screen P15341(1)? But it is in your packs a little later on – a letter to Dr Lewis dated 8 December 2015, which explains, in some detail, the location of the switches and crossings, why they're there, their connection with the proposed interchange station, and the implications of attempting to move them in terms of the consequential structure and the impacts that would have.

107. It goes over the page. I'll let the Committee read out. I'm not going to read out. But page 1 explains the switch and crossings in this area and page 2 considers the implications of trying to move, and you can see, the current design for Shadowbrook addressed the issue of switches and crossings by adopting a buried box structure that removes joints and minimises movement. The hard spot created by the structure is buried with around two metres of fill to avoid the sudden change in stiffness of the formation. That can be further mitigated with detailed design. And then, in the next paragraph, 'Diddington Lane to be maintained broadly on its current realignment – the track would need to be lifted on to a continuous viaduct under all the SNC units in order

to provide continuous stiff support' and then the consequence of that in dealing with the approach to the A45 and the interchange station and the consequential track raise is summarised in that letter.

108. So, for the reasons we have actually explained, there are problems with – significant problems and consequential knock on consequences of changing the switch and crossing units and the way they're located.

109. Another feature, of course, of AP2 is the re-introduction of Diddington Lane on a re-alignment. Again, I don't know if the plan's available yet, but you can see that we have, as part of AP2, re-introduced Diddington Lane, which was previously going to be stocked up. You can see that on P15335(4). If that doesn't come up on screen, I'll just briefly explain. As you are well aware, Diddington Lane is an existing road. We had previously – because we sever it with the railway, we've previously proposed to stop it up. We've received petitioners from the landowners and the farms in the area about farm access, the consequences of severing that route, and as a consequence, we have proposed, in the additional provision, to the re-introduction of Diddington Lane, but on a realigned version to address the switch and crossing problems that we've identified.

110. And in AP2 – and I'm not going to take the Committee through it, but in AP2, the Environmental Statement, you can see a number of options were considered in choosing the realignment of Diddington Lane, including going under, along the existing Diddington Lane – options 1, 2 and 3, paragraphs 5.10.6 in the Environmental Statement. Those were all assessed and the option 1 that was proposed is the one shown in the additional provision 2, and that road reinstates the kind of activity that currently exists. It restores the position to the status quo, albeit on a realignment in response to various petitions.

111. Now, clearly there are differences of view, and I appreciate that, and the Parish Council and residents have seen the previous hybrid proposal as an opportunity to close of Diddington Lane, and when we proposed that in the Highway Bill, we were met with corresponding objections from the landowners and estates. So, we have gone back to restoring the status quo of putting Diddington Lane back on the realignment we've shown in order to, effectively, return the position to the status quo.

112. On the question of Diddington Lane and its safety, we have done a stage 1 road

safety audit of Diddington Lane as it connects to the A452, Kenilworth Road to the north – again, I can't show you on the screen. But that's at the top of Diddington Lane on P15335(4), and it connects into the A452, and I'm not sure why the petitioners thought we haven't, but we have done a stage 1 road safety audit, and of course, as the Committee will be well aware, the detailed design of that road, and its alignment with the junction will have to be approved by the Highway Authority in due course, and detailed design with have to ensure it's safe.

113. The – just wanted to explain the position so far as the local Highway Authority is concerned, is that whilst we have designed the realignment to be as consistent as possible with the rural roads in this area – and there is – I hesitate to put it up, because I'm not sure it's going to be on the system, but there is a slide that explains the factors that we've built into our design – P15340. That's available. P15340. We've built in as many features in the proposed alignment to give it rural characteristics, and indeed, the realignment has more bends than the previous status of Diddington Lane. But you can see what measures we've sought to introduce to give it a rural character.

114. However, we have already provided an assurance to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. If I can show you P15440(1), the short point about this is that we will, in the detailed design of that realignment, in paragraph 1, take into account any measures that are reasonably proposed for traffic calming, or traffic restrictions along Diddington Lane. And so, the opportunity there in the detailed design includes anything to deal with traffic calming and traffic speeds, or whatever else is of concern to the Highway Authority. So, that's all the progress that will take place at a detailed design.

115. And the last part of this is the fact that we have taken into account the further representations that have been made by the Parish Council and the local residents. We have done a review of their Diddington Lane options. There is a report, which we've made available to the Committee – P15342(1) – and we shared with the community, and we've considered a number of their options. And again, I wasn't proposing to take you through it now, but you can see by way of traffic light system – P15342(16) – that we've done an assessment of a number of different options. And this table here summarises the effect of the different options. AP2 is, of course, our scheme. Option 2 is the one that the petitioners refer to, which is very similar to AP2, but it has more – the radius of the curves is shorter, so the bends are more significant. And you can see that

whilst that may reduce the land take, it has an effect because it would take us outside bill powers. It has a cost effect, and it would not comply with highway standards for the road. And what we have, therefore, said, in this report, is that option 2 is something that – if it were to be delivered – would require the cooperation of the Highway Authority, first of all, to use their powers to allow us to change it, and secondly, to give approval for a road, which would be below the design standards, and that is a matter for discussion with the Highway Authority, and we've identified that.

116. That explains where we are. We've looked at the other options. They are considerably less desirable, in effect. So, we have listened actively to what's been said, and we have explained that any further progression of a change to what we're proposing for AP2, is really in the hands of the Highway Authority.

117. Can I then turn to the waste recycling centre? You know a bit about this already. I think we've previously explained that the works that are required to the A45, which are significant in this area mean that following detailed investigations we don't believe we can do those works without affecting the existing recycling centre access. Mr Smart can explain that if you want more detail of it, but that's something we've discussed in detail with Solihull and it was for that reason – and I don't know if we can get P15331 on screen – it was for that reason that we have put forward in our Supplementary Environmental Statement, proposed relocation of the waste recycling centre. Can I just show you, it's up here? These are the major works that are being done to the roads, where they have to pass over the railway and of course if we could do those major construction works without affecting the recycling centre, it would be in our interest to do that, because we have no particular desire to move the recycling centre if we could avoid it. But the current indications are that we have – we can't do that without affecting the recycling centre, and that's something we've discussed with Solihull. As part of that process we proposed relocating it 200 metres effectively, to the north – or the north-east – and it would be served of course, again, off the A45 slip roads as currently. You've heard us explain that.

118. I'm not going to go into detail – although there is some detail – of the proposals for landscaping etc. and the footpaths. However, we know of course that the local community are concerned about that, as is the landowner who came in, I think, previously. What we have done is enter into an assurance on the waste recycling centre

with the landowner, and that's dated 18 January, and I think it's been worked up into an agreement. 18 January 2015, P15439(1), and the short summary of that agreement or assurance, is that we will look at an alternative relocation site and (2) contains the meat of the assurance. We will look at an alternative relocation for the site – sorry (2) – in consultation with Solihull and the Packington Estate. We've got the next page? You can see paragraph 3, the nominated undertaker together with Solihull, Packington Estate, identifying and agreeing on appropriate alternative relocation sites. The promoter will use reasonable endeavours to relocate it on that alternative relocation site. Then paragraph 4, the commitment to relocate is subject to certain conditions, which are all set out in A-F which include, of course, the ability to deliver that alternative relocation site on an alternative site with the consent of the relevant owner of the site, the necessary powers being given for us to do it, and the assessment of course of the cost of doing so.

119. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: So that applies to both the relocation site and the alternative relocation site?

120. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): The current relocation site is one that –

121. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: You've got the powers?

122. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): We've got the powers because we already have the land –

123. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: This would be if everyone comes to an agreement and says, 'Not that but something else?'

124. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Exactly, because that would be outside the powers of the Bill; so that's why we've built in those provisos. So clearly if there's a will – as there appears to be – from the landowner and the local authority to look at an alternative relocation site, we are cooperating fully in that process.

125. So that of course means we leave – we are in the position leaving both Diddington Lane and its current alignment, and the waste recycling centre, there within the powers of the Bill, subject to what I've explained as the efforts we've made to reconsider the recycling centre's location.

126. CHAIR: Okay.

127. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): So I think those are the key points. I'm sorry I couldn't show you everything on the screen, but I hope you managed to follow.

128. CHAIR: Okay, thank you. Brief final comments, Dr?

129. DR LEWIS: Thank you. Yes, going back to our first petition, I think we're still concerned about the haul routes, the haul route that's been identified across the narrow bridge at Patrick's farm, and then along the residential Diddington Lane. We still maintain that it would be preferable to have the work bases and the spoil tips to the east of the trace, in order to cause as little disruption as possible to a residential area. I don't know...?

130. CHAIR: We are discussing Additional Provisions, we did discuss this before?

131. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): If I could show you on the screen – I don't think I can – but the construction daily weekday traffic flows, P15337(2), the haul road is on the western side because that is where the centre of gravity is for all the operations including the compound which needs to be there, although we'll look at its relocation, of course, the Diddington Lane realignment, and connecting into the two sites. We're in the flood plain on the other side as well. So it's not something we're able at the moment to move and there's an engineering logic to where it is. What I can show from this, AP2, is that we don't actually propose construction traffic through the heart of Hampton-in-Arden G and H show zero flows; and C and D likewise show, I think, very low flows, if no flows. So the haul road has to be where it is, but we have as part of that, we've managed to minimise any significant construction activity in the village itself.

132. DR LEWIS: But Diddington Lane is part of the village; people live there.

133. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): I understand that, but I've explained what we're doing to Diddington Lane and I've identified how we construct it. You can see from this plan, that the vehicles come in from the north A and B – and they're very limited in terms of HGVs – I think there are five HGVs each way for the construction of Diddington Lane.

134. CHAIR: Okay.

135. MR BLANCH: Could I just make one comment in response about AP4, that's the waste facility?

136. CHAIR: Okay.

137. MR BLANCH: We understand – and I'm pleased that there are consultations going on. My plea would be, as with all that you have heard, that those consultations, the discussions, and progress, should be a much more open process, so that the community, the Parish Council, the Hampton Society, all those affected, can at least be informed about what the developments are, what the thinking is and what the outcome might be, long before it is formally announced. Because that is exactly what has happened hitherto. A decision has been announced and there has been no consultation. That is very regrettable and is not in the spirit of what you're trying to do. All that we have done as a Society and Parish Council, for the last four years, has been to try and work on issues of mitigation, and betterment, in terms of what High Speed Rail are trying to do, and that included the viaduct, which indeed was our idea and was settled in the corridor before we met you just on the day that we came to see you in December 2014. But that was our idea, that was from our own experience that this would not work without there being a longer viaduct. We are pleased that that was taken on board, and acknowledge that – fully acknowledge that that was taken on board. But in terms of the waste facility and all of the other elements that we've talked about, more openness would be greatly appreciated and would lead to resolve so many of the difficulties that we've explained to you today.

138. CHAIR: As Mr Strachan has explained, that would go through the normal planning processes and local authority processes, okay?

139. DR LEWIS: Did you want to say –

140. CHAIR: Only one of you really is meant to speak in brief final remarks? I hope this is very brief?

141. MR DOIDGE: Very brief. Two very quick points that were mentioned. My friend here mentioned that safety audit for Diddington Lane. The meeting we had with

HS2 two and a half weeks ago, they confirmed that, yes, a safety audit was done for Stonebridge roundabout, but one was not done for Diddington Lane. So that's just a point of information.

142. The second one is, talking about the standards for the option that we – one of the options that we suggested, the one that's been taken on board, the relevant highway standards allow a stepped design approach. We've seen that HS2's proposals was two steps below; the option that we proposed is three. The standard, TD9 actually allows you to go up to four steps below. Now, we have maintained that for a 50mph speed limit. If as a result of discussions with the highway authority we drop that to 40mph, which is in keeping with other lanes in the vicinity, that would indeed save money rather than cost extra money; and wouldn't need the extra widening for sight lines, and it would save less land take. So it would result in less land take.

143. CHAIR: Alright, thank you very much.

144. DR LEWIS: Thank you very much.

145. CHAIR: Alright, we now move on to AP2: 43, Elizabeth and Graham Juniper?

Elizabeth and Graham Juniper

146. DR LEWIS: That's me again. Mr and Mrs Juniper have asked me to address you on their behalf today. Your petitioners have been residents of Meriden Road running through Hampton-in-Arden for many years. Mr Juniper has been very involved in the community as a borough councillor, parish councillor, and trustee of the George Fentham Trust, and as a long-time supporter of our Member of Parliament. Graham and Elizabeth supported the plans contained in the original Bill to close Diddington Lane to through-traffic, whilst allowing access for farm traffic, walkers, etc. They've studied the AP2 documents and consider that the amendments to the Bill will seriously impact on their enjoyment of their home, and the quality of life within the village. This is as a result of increased traffic flow through the village, using Diddington Lane as, they say a rat run, to the interchange station, which they consider will result, if the lane remains open, to through-traffic. They comment that the village roads are already considerably busier than they used to be, and are dangerous for elderly and the young to traverse between their homes and village services. They feel that this would be exacerbated if

Diddington Lane remains open to through-traffic when High Speed 2 is operational.

147. Graham has also asked me to comment that the proposal to keep the lane open was developed with Packington Estate without consulting village residents or the Parish Council.

148. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Can we assume that most of the rest of what you're going to say is what you've said to us already?

149. DR LEWIS: It's just a comment from Mr Juniper and it's very short. That in his opinion, this demonstrated a total disregard for the democratic process, which he fought to defend during his many years involved with the political process; and he also commented that he felt residents were being treated with contempt as they were only given four weeks, through the summer holidays, to respond to the proposals. They contend that Diddington Lane must be closed to through-traffic and asked that the promoter be required to undertake a review of all the options available in cooperation with the various petitioners so that a mutually agreeable solution, acceptable to all stakeholders, is agreed before the Bill goes forward.

150. CHAIR: Alright, thank you.

151. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Can I ask a question? Would Solihull have the power to close a new Diddington Lane or to put in restrictions so it was only used for Packington Estate purposes and agricultural purposes?

152. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Yes.

153. CHAIR: Okay. We now move on to 461, First Great Western, which was settled so won't be appearing. 596.

154. DR LEWIS: Could I comment – the gentleman said that I might be able to present the last one and then you can get rid of me?

155. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Why don't you leave out the second part of that, and say, can you present the last one?

156. CHAIR: Which is the last one you're doing?

157. DR LEWIS: This is on behalf of the George Fentham, Hampton-in-Arden Charity?

158. CHAIR: Okay, that's AP2: 83?

The George Fentham Hampton-in-Arden Charity

159. DR LEWIS: Thank you very much. I've been asked by the trustees of the charity, as I was here today, to speak about their petition; and just a bit of background. The charity was established on the death of George Fentham in 1690 with money left in trust to help with the education of young people in the village; and to ensure the wellbeing of elderly residents. Two of the objectives of the charity are the general benefit of the inhabitants of the village; and the relief of persons who are in need, in hardship or distress. The charity owns a significant amount of land in and around Hampton-in-Arden, including land in Diddington Lane. It also owns the land and buildings constituting the village school, and provides significant additional funding, much of which supports pupils with additional needs. It provides and manages 15 alms-houses for elderly residents and finances a care worker for vulnerable, elderly village residents; and sponsors a fortnightly lunch club for the elderly.

160. For these reasons, the charity maintains that its rights as a landowner and its rights and interests to ensure the welfare of the young and elderly and otherwise vulnerable residents is seriously injuriously affected by the amendments AP2 to the Bill, to which they object.

161. They comment that the promoter's original proposal to close Diddington Lane, etc. you've heard about, they supported. They believe that AP2, to realign Diddington Lane will have a range of adverse impacts on the vulnerable residents of the village, both the young and elderly, both during construction and operation of the scheme, which should be clearly and adequately assessed.

162. The environmental impact, such as traffic volumes, noise and air quality changes within Hampton-in-Arden as a result of the changes to the Bill, and how these will impact on the groups which we support, they feel have not been taken into consideration. They have looked at the Environmental Statement 3, which assumes that many of these issues will be unchanged by AP2, and therefore no further impact studies

were done as part of ES3. The petitioner's prime concern relates to the increased traffic volumes which will result from the realignment of Diddington Lane; a new road built to *DMRB* standards will encourage traffic from Solihull and southern villages to travel to the interchange station using Diddington Lane. They comment that the village roads are already very busy. The roads and the pavements are narrow, and it's a problem for residents with mobility scooters and for children walking to and from school.

163. The charity owns 15 bungalows in the village, which are occupied by elderly residents and also owns the land and buildings of the village school. With the likely increase in traffic, your petitioners fear for the safety of residents and for the freedom of the young and elderly to move about the village and shops and surgeries in safety.

164. Your petitioners therefore seek an undertaking that further discussions will take place between the promoter and representatives of all the affected parties, to consider in detail all possible options for Diddington Lane. They understand that engineers within the community have suggested possible alternative solutions and we ask that these be given serious consideration. We humbly request that an acceptable solution is identified that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

165. CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. In general, you have responded on Diddington Lane –

166. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): It's the same response; I refer you back to my answer. We have actually done an assessment of traffic flows through Diddington Lane with the scheme operational, which is on the system. But as is already indicated, that ultimately is a matter for control by the highway authority under its powers. But we are showing very limited changes to traffic on Diddington Lane with our scheme operational; I think it's up to 2% change of traffic – that's P15337(4).

167. CHAIR: Okay.

168. DR LEWIS: Could I ask how that estimation has been arrived at?

169. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): It's arrived at, making assumptions as to how traffic flows based on existing traffic patterns and desire lines, or desires for traffic to move to the station, the new station; and assumptions are made by those who have experience

and expertise in traffic modelling.

170. CHAIR: Okay, right. Thank you very much; safely journey back to all of you. We now go on to AP2: 20, Taroni Metals, who have a statement. So we don't have Taroni Metals? Mr Turney do you have the statement?

171. MR TURNEY (DfT): I think Mr Strachan is going to deal with the statement.

Taroni Metals

172. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): We have had some useful discussions with the petitioners' agents and the petitioners, outside today, and I'm just going to read a statement of where we've got to in relation to that.

173. Between now and May this year, we will look at provision of access via a temporary haul route, as shown on P15320 – which I will just get up on screen for the committee – in order to address the concerns of the petitioner. Just to remind you where we are, if you don't mind me doing that? We're obviously up in Birmingham here; this is the Aston Church Road, here, Arley Road here. There is the Saltley Business Park in this area and further to the south. There is Cargo Express building here, which we take under the Bill and demolish in order to create the Aston Church Road, which is passing over the railway in this location, just to give you an idea. The petitioner's property are these, outlined red, and there's some land they also use outlined in purple. So what we have said, and I'll go back to the statement: between now and May we will look at provision of access via the temporary haul route – which is the yellow shown on P15320 – and if that work, which we are going to do, does not satisfy the petitioner's concerns, they can appear before the House of Lords, and no point will be taken from us that they did not raise their arguments before this committee. We will additionally work with the petitioner to explain a detailed timetable and a specification for the works to Aston Church Road, to allow the petitioner to arrange its business around the HS2 works.

174. CHAIR: Okay.

175. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): And that's a reference to our works that we need to do to Aston Church Road for the realignment across the railway.

176. CHAIR: Alright, and the petitioners are happy with that?

177. MR TARONI: Yes, sir.

178. CHAIR: Alright, thank you very much indeed.

179. MR TARONI: Thank you.

180. CHAIR: Right, we now move on to AP2: 24, AP2: 25, AP2: 26, AP2: 27, AP2: 28, AP2: 29, 30, 31, 32, represented by David Tomkins.

Hampton-in-Arden HS2 Action Group

181. MR HALSEY: It's David Halsey.

182. CHAIR: It's David Halsey is it?

183. MR HALSEY: Yes, we changed the name.

184. CHAIR: I know you've been sitting in here. If this is still about Diddington Lane, we won't be asking the promoter to repeat what he's said before, because we've heard what he's already said before.

185. MR HALSEY: I'm going to build on what's been said, so with a bit of luck, I think some of the things he has to address.

186. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Are you related to the Bishop, David Halsey?

187. MR HALSEY: No, I wish I was; his estate's very nice! We have one missing... I think he might have gone to the toilet.

188. CHAIR: Or got lost in the House of Lords?

189. MR HALSEY: Possibly, easily done.

190. CHAIR: Who are you waiting for?

191. MR HALSEY: John Timperley.

192. CHAIR: Do you also include the people on the following page, which are also Diddington Lane?

193. MR HALSEY: Sorry?

194. CHAIR: Do you also include the people on the following page, which are also Diddington Lane.

195. MR HALSEY: Yes, we think there are actually 23 petitioners.

196. CHAIR: Okay, that's 33 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, and 88?

197. MR HALSEY: Yes.

198. CHAIR: On the screen I've indicated the petitioners that we'll refer to.

199. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Not 83, that's been done.

200. CHAIR: 83 has been done.

201. MR HALSEY: Right, good morning everybody. Thank you for the opportunity to – for the Hampton-in-Arden HS2 Action Group, as we call ourselves, to build on the previous Parish Council and Hampton-in-Arden Society submissions, through words and pictures. We're going to try and do this differently to add and bring to life the concerns that we have. As I've said, we represent 23 local petitioners and they're primarily objecting to the Additional Provision 2 and the proposed realignment of Diddington Lane.

202. Can I have the next slide please? We were formed in 2015; we had about 50 residents, over 50 residents, across Hampton-in-Arden, a broad range of residents and individuals. Our purpose was primarily to oppose the AP2 and AP4 proposals, as were detailed for Diddington Lane and obviously the waste recycling facility. I'm David Halsey; I'm the chair of that group; and with me today is Sarah Hussein and John Timperley and David Betts is in reserve in the rear, should we need him. The key here is that we represent the strength of village reaction to the AP2 proposals at Diddington Lane and the overall impact it's going to have on our village.

203. Obviously the petitioners incurred time and cost to address this and present their proposals and concerns, back through this process, and the idea is that we want to mitigate the impact of the proposed diversion. Again, it's been repeated before, with the primary aim of avoiding a rat run for traffic and I'll come onto how we think that's going to materialise.

204. Okay, next one please? Right, why we are here: we believe that the lane diversion is unnecessary. I still have to see and hear why the promoter believes that it's still necessary to divert the lane. I appreciate that there's a legal agreement associated with Packington Estates – that was a behind-closed-door arrangement. There has been no consultation with the local residents –

205. CHAIR: It was in a corridor.

206. MR HALSEY: It was in a corridor! I know it happens; I'm not naïve about that.

207. CHAIR: It is part of the process; people settle; today there are several businesses that are settled in the corridor.

208. MR HALSEY: Fine, but the implication of that is that we still don't understand the consequence of that action and why it is still not an option to consider shutting the lane. There's been very little consultation. We ask that there is a reconsideration of that option, to close the lane to normal vehicle traffic, for through-traffic. Obviously it can still be retained for access with local traffic and restricted for farm vehicles where appropriate. We're very concerned about increased traffic volumes, the impact on personal health, the safety and various environmental issues. The consequence of all this is, we feel that we should actually have major concerns about the increased economic blight in this area.

209. The pictures here show you Diddington Lane is a typically rural lane; the point of the right-hand picture is to show you the significant traffic risk and congestion in the centre of Hampton-in-Arden which is a major congestion point. You can see trucks and cars trying to traverse that area; and down in the bottom picture, the significant issue regarding the failure of the road to meet required standards, the limited width of the paths. By definition, if you are going to increase and open Diddington Lane and take that as a route, as has already been suggested, traffic will follow the shortest route, and it's going to go through the village and down that lane, to get to the interchange station.

210. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: A rat run which does no good but it does harm to you?

211. MR HALSEY: It does harm to the whole area. That's the point that I'm going to

try and make here. If we go to the next slide – apologies, this isn't the all-singing, all-dancing sort of map graphics that the people on the left have produced. I tried in a simple way to try and indicate how this is affecting the area. You can see in the yellow circle - or the oblong whatever you wish to call it – where, roughly – this is not to scale and it's not true dimensions – the HS2 line will go. You can see in the red the AP2 proposed diversion that will take a traverse across to the west of the line and then bring back onto Diddington Lane. AP4, as was proposed, but clearly things were changed there. The other thing about this whole area is: massive infrastructural issues. You can see that we have got the NEC, Airport, Birmingham International, all in very close proximity to this. The points that have already been made about the way the traffic will have to enter into the A45, the way that Diddington Lane will enter onto the A452. Diddington Lane is unclassified; it's not even a B-road. We're talking here about substantially, sort of, changing its status, from one of catering to local traffic to one of being almost a through-route.

212. The blob at the bottom I've indicated is the major congestion point at the centre of Hampton. That is a right-angled, 90-degree bend that I showed you in the picture before. That is a significant hazard to traverse, even for ordinary cars. A number of accidents happen on that bend, because effectively, traffic swings out. It's exceptionally dangerous; the number of times that the church wall has been destroyed or hit goes without question, and the house that's immediately opposite from it has been hit three times recently.

213. The other thing, the other component that's adding to all this is there is some early discussion about a proposed M42 service area, which is on that same road coming into Hampton-in-Arden, suggested it will be developed at the same time as Diddington Lane is redeveloped. So in 2017, Hampton becomes an island of building, construction work, effectively. It will be faced with significant problems.

214. The other thing I wanted to highlight – and this is something of a precedent. I've indicated there, Old Station Road closed. Now, a precedent was set by a previous Secretary of State where he allowed residents in Old Station Road in Hampton-in-Arden to take a vote on whether the road should be retained, open or closed, associated with the development of the NEC – because, again, it was perceived that if it was allowed to remain open, it would exacerbate traffic going through the village; it would compound

the congestion that's already in the area. That open vote decided that the Old Station Road should be closed, and was subsequently done.

215. Now, we would suggest that was a very healthy way to approach a problem in this particular area, and the Secretary of State for Transport acknowledged that there was an issue and adopted a very pragmatic approach, which was allowing individuals to vote when there were options available. I think this is something that I would like others to consider.

216. Can we move on...?

217. MR HENDRICK: Who was that?

218. MR HALSEY: You've got me now; it was well before I was born I think. I think we're going back – back in 1974, some time ago. But it did set a precedent, as a vehicle and mechanism for having residents involved in the decision-making around this type of infrastructure and development. And the NEC is massive; the Airport, NEC, Birmingham International, the whole thing about the airport extension. The congestion in that area is unbelievable through most of the day, from rush hours to weekends, it's just constant congestion. Anybody who's had the unfortunate good luck to travel on it through the weekday and at rush hour times, it's just quite unbearable. It's an M25.

219. So, can we move on –

220. CHAIR: What would happen if you voted to close the road, and the farmers are disadvantaged as a result of that? Would you pay them compensation?

221. MR HALSEY: No, we don't understand Chairman why they would be disadvantaged because, as has already been raised by the Parish Council, and what we wanted to cover off, the disadvantage was because they previously were taken advantage of cutting across what is a restricted dual carriageway. They were –

222. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: That junction we were talking about –

223. MR HALSEY: The issue there –

224. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: The non-junction –

225. MR HALSEY: It's a non-valid junction. People were seeing it – and I saw myself, several vehicles make an illegal right-turn into Diddington Lane. The farmers, since that fatality, the police have gone and talked to them, in Packington Estates etc. and they now are more than happy to come round, into Diddington Lane from the Meriden Road. So they no longer use it as a short-cut access. If it was stopped both ends, as was suggested in the original proposal, vehicle access to farms could still be delivered, it would be still be achieved, and it would avoid a lot of the concerns that we have as petitioners and residents.

226. If I move onto the next slide? Try to give an indication here of the simplistic route system that is presented, effectively, associated with the AP2 option. Now, the red route, which effectively comes out from Catherine-de-Barnes, and Solihull should officially go up towards the airport, and then down the A45. That's 5.2km in length and should take about five minutes travelling time. The blue route is the route that goes along Diddington Lane; it takes six minutes currently but is shorter, 5km. That's why the satellite navigation systems push you down Diddington Lane to head out towards Stonebridge Island, and ultimately where the interchange station would be, it would take you on that route. The yellow route is where you carry on through the village, go out to the Kenilworth Road, the A452. That's 6.5km and take seven minutes. Our issue, our concern is from a residents' point of view, if the lane was closed for farmers, you're adding 1.3 miles to the distance – insignificant, insignificant time. Do not believe anyone would have issues with that, if it protected lives, protected the environment and mitigated excess traffic coming through what is effectively –

227. CHAIR: We have heard for two years, arguing when roads have been stopped up and closed, this is greatly disadvantaging their lives when they have several hundred yards more to go –

228. MR HALSEY: Several hundred what, sorry?

229. CHAIR: We've had petitioners up and down the route arguing the opposite.

230. MR HALSEY: On Diddington Lane?

231. CHAIR: No, I'm just saying, that when HS2 stopped up roads or created problems where people have to go rather longer to where they have to get to, it's been a

perennial moan all the way down the route.

232. MR HALSEY: I can accept, Chairman, that that is an argument, because it's the obvious counter-argument to what we're advocating. But the issue for us, at this point in time, we believe that the only real advocates wishing to have that lane kept open was the farming community in Packington Estates in particular. The issue here is that we do not believe that that small additional distance – and they are already following that yellow route to get into their farm areas, rather than cutting across – so if they are coming from north of Stonebridge – does this work? So if you are coming in from here, what the farmers are now doing, instead of doing that, and going into their farming areas. They are now travelling down here and actually going back up to enter legally. That's the important point. So, it's something about not blocking and stopping access routes; it's about going with the original Bill proposition, and actually delivering something that makes sense for everybody.

233. Now if I can just add something to this, before we move onto the next slide, the important thing for me was, in the original Environmental Statement, northbound Diddington Lane and – I think Sarah will show the same pictures that the Council have shown – what was stated there was that northbound Diddington Lane traffic at peak times, one hour, averaged about 122 cars back in 2012. It would be 150 in 2021, and 152 in 2026. Ironic, when the road would have been closed, because we are not sure how you can increase numbers of cars when there's closure to through-traffic, but those are the figures that were presented. Similarly, eastbound traffic on the Meriden Road here, would've have increased from 449 in 2012 to 563 by 2026, relatively minor improvements.

234. Now, in 2014, Solihull Council actually undertook an automated volume traffic count, that showed that northbound traffic on Diddington Lane averaged over 24 hours, 1,053 vehicles, that included HGV. In the peak hour that HS2 and the promoter have done their work, it was 112. So the figures are not dissimilar. Average traffic going through the village, around about 3,000-3,500 vehicles a day at that time. Now, in the latest AP2 analysis, northbound Diddington Lane traffic is forecast in 2021 to be 1,935 vehicles. Now, I make that not the 5% - or less than 5% increase that the promoter is advocating; I make that somewhere in the order of 84% increase over the valid 2014. That's listed against the maps that Sarah will cover off. Similarly, for eastbound traffic,

going down the Meriden Road, they also advocate 1,935 vehicles by 2026.

235. So, they're suggesting that the increase forecast on eastbound traffic, that Meriden Road is somewhere approaching 6,836 vehicles, over 100% increase in traffic volumes. Now, note the pictures that I showed you. That congestion point alone, if you were carrying six thousand cars a day through that one point, how are you ever going to deal with traffic and the impact on the local infrastructure. That level of traffic flow cannot be sustained on the road infrastructure that is currently and probably will never be in the future fit for purpose. So I would like to hand over to Sarah now who will carry on?

236. MS HUSSAIN: Okay, can I have the next slide please? While you are finding that, can I just set the scene? I am a mum; I live in the village. I work part-time but the rest of the time I'm a mum – I take my children to school. I am here a bit reluctantly, but I think it represents a personal view. I don't live on Diddington Lane, but I live on the main road within Hampton-in-Arden. I also work for the NHS, so I have an interest in the risks associated with keeping Diddington Lane open in terms of the safety and security of all village members, particularly with young children.

237. So I think Dave's clearly indicated that with Diddington Lane open in any form, it would increase additional traffic, including HGVs through the village, and I want to go onto say how I think this will impact us.

238. I think the first slide we've talked about is the main village. I think one of the things for me is, I have a child at secondary school, and he crosses the road, high street at the moment. There is no secondary school within the village, so he goes by bus to another secondary school. There is no pavement on our side of the road, so he needs to cross the road in order to reach the bus stop, and he does this at the moment on his own. With increased traffic, I think that's a risk to children such as himself; there are two sharp bends, one just before our house and one is indicated in this top slide, which means that visibility along the road is not good at the moment, and with more traffic and people travelling faster to make their train, I think that has a bigger impact.

239. I think that the second slide shows the out-turn at Diddington Lane onto the A452 which has been discussed. I am not aware of any safety audit that was done for Diddington Lane around that at all, and obviously that's a risk for drivers with the increased number of traffic on Diddington Lane.

240. The realignment of Diddington Lane takes out the bend as shown in the last two slides, and smooths it out, and I think that would increase the speed of traffic moving along the realigned road, which obviously has issues for people who walk there or who walk their dogs there.

241. Can we have the next slide please? So as you may know, that any – that the young particularly are sensitive to pollution from increased traffic volumes because they have – they breathe more quickly and they have – I’m not a technical expert on this, but it’s been shown to increase the blood levels of things like nitrous oxide and the other particulates from diesel fumes etc. So more traffic would obviously be a risk to the young. But also to elderly residents who are more at risk of things like COPD and things like that. So I think any increased traffic brought through the village with the lane open would be compounded and increase personal health and safety risk. Obviously more cars means more noise and more vehicle pollution, particularly I believe – at the moment the village is quite quiet at night, but I believe that Diddington Lane open and for it to be the quickest way to get to the new station, would mean that traffic would increase at all times of the day.

242. I think the second slide here shows the illegal crossing point with the cones, which has physically stopped traffic coming from the other side of the dual carriageway, crossing illegally into Diddington Lane, so that slide indicates that.

243. So I believe the only option to prevent these concerns – or to keep – to alleviate the concerns, is to close the lane through to through-traffic apart from agricultural vehicles.

244. Can we have the next slide please? I think as residents, we are aware – I’ve lived in the village for 14 years, so we are aware of how much traffic we have at the moment. I think we simply don’t believe the estimates of the traffic flows, because in our experience, when there’s an accident on the M42, traffic comes through the village. People know of this route; people cut through it already to the dump; and I think that local knowledge of this is more powerful than an assessment which is an assumption.

245. The other thing is, I think the additional flooding risk, due to the materials compound, I think the fact that HS2 decided to site their compound on an area which we know floods regularly shows that there is not good knowledge of the local area. And I

think that building an extra road, obviously has an increased environmental impact overall. New roads will have increased noise; I think AP2 suggests that the Environmental Statement suggests the decibels would be 59-60dB. We have current village analysis from one of our residents which shows that it's already at 80dB. So, again, there's a lot of data that we don't understand and doesn't seem to relate to our local – our knowledge.

246. Finally, I guess that the additional loss of greenbelt and agricultural land by putting in what we think's an unnecessary route, so the original Environmental Statement and subsequent AP2 environmental reports, suggests that homes on Diddington Lane would experience significant residual and permanent effects, and that the things that they're suggesting to mitigate this would take years – actually, they state 60 years – for mature trees to develop. I don't think I'm going to be here to see that. So I think any uprooting and taking out of hedges and things disrupts the environment and habitats for all sorts of animals, and things like that, and then it takes a long time to mitigate that effect, for residents, when we see it as unnecessary.

247. Thank you, I'm going to hand over to John now?

248. MR TIMPERLEY: Thank you, can we have the next slide please?

249. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: What's your name?

250. MR TIMPERLEY: John Timperley, good morning. We don't want to pretend that the group's sole concerns are related to road safety and environmental effects. The core of the group is in fact residents of the lane itself. We are all personally adversely affected by the AP2 proposal in terms of blight.

251. When HS2 was originally announced, Lane residents were all concerned that the proposal would be negative for them in terms of property values, etc., by comparison with other homes less close to the line. But we felt that this was compensated for by the proposed closure of the Lane which would turn it, effectively, into a cul-de-sac at our end, on the south end of the Lane. We therefore felt that the two balanced out and that we could live with this as a proposal, and therefore no petitions etc. were forthcoming from us in terms of that original proposal.

252. Between the original announcement and AP2, houses were selling reasonably well in the Lane. It seems that the original proposal had relatively little effect on property values. I think as some of the people that we represent can testify, purchasers of property in that period did so in the belief that the Lane would be closed. How wrong they were.

253. AP2 means that the residents of the Lane are doubly affected; firstly we have the obvious intrusion of the line itself; but now we are also faced by significantly increased traffic outside our front doors. Since the announcement of AP2, residents have been finding it far more difficult to sell their homes; some have given up on the prospect; I certainly have. We are proposing – we are thinking we are going to have to stay here until 2028, where we are – otherwise those houses – those residents who have sold houses have lost significant amounts of money in comparison to what they would've done before. All of them have sold at significantly lower values than is what appears to be the market value. Indeed, one of the properties was only changed hands by being purchased by HS2 itself. Overall, studies are suggesting that generally the property devaluation is around about 20% and discussions with estate agents indicate that the values of local properties really have fallen significantly, particularly as a result of AP2 and AP4.

254. We think this is iniquitous; that we have to bear so much financial and personal distress as a result of AP2. The proposal really ignores these indirect consequences; they aren't related, effectively, to the line itself. It's to indirect infrastructure changes that are making the effect of increased traffic etc., and as far as we're aware, very limited compensation is available to us.

255. I wanted also to just talk about the HS2 build costs. As has been pointed out earlier in the day by our Parish Council colleagues, there are alternative technical solutions to this problem. We really do believe that the promoter and Packington Estate should consider those options before a final proposal is presented ahead of construction.

256. Our opinion is that the best solution is closure of the lane. This would allow the promoter to construct all the rail outturns and the crossovers as required in the vicinity of the lane, without the requirement to reposition.

257. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Is it clear where you'd have the lane closed?

258. MR HALSEY: Yes, there were two positions marked on the original proposal, one in the south, one in the north; and they would stand, in my view.

259. MR TIMPERLEY: And I guess one of the frustrations for us really is to say, for all intents and purposes, Diddington Lane is a one-way route. The traffic flow along the road is 10 to 1 in terms of northbound versus southbound, because there is relatively little traffic volume that wants to use it southbound, because it isn't accessible from the northern end, really. But the promoter is proposing to spend £2 million to upgrade this road to a full-spec highway; and also at the same time, lose hectares and hectares of good agricultural land. It just does not make sense to us at all.

260. So, we urge the committee to ensure that the promoter investigates and consults all of the viable build options, to avoid unnecessary cost. This would retain the inherent rural nature of the lane, mitigate significant risk to the road safety of local residents and other road users, by ensuring that the inevitable higher traffic volumes that will result from the proximity to the HS2 station, are re-directed without fail, via better constructed routes, by other current major roads. As we have said, the simple solution is to close the Lane. Thank you.

261. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: I have a question: the agricultural traffic which we were told use the unauthorised crossing of the central reservation, was trying to come south on Diddington Lane. How far south was it trying to get? As far as Hampton-in-Arden –

262. MR HALSEY: Nowhere near Hampton village; it was just coming into fields that could've been easily accessed from the reverse entry of Meriden Road. That was the issue: it was a quick and easy way for the north of Stonebridge island, farmers getting through to the north side of the lane without having to go another 1.3 miles around. Since the police have discussed it with them –

263. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: If the lane were closed, which may be a matter for Solihull rather than for us, would you expect that Diddington Lane would remain open so they could get into those fields, but be blocked rather than just taken up?

264. MR HALSEY: Yes, Sir Peter. Because that was the principle that I think has been discussed previously: you can put measures in place that would allow access for

specified vehicles – farmers, emergency vehicles, obviously from a residents’ point of view, I think that residents would be happy that we go around the longer way. But the thing is, farming access would not be prohibited if the lane was closed as originally proposed, is our perspective of this. I don’t think the farmers would necessarily decry that either. It’s just they did not want to take that extra short travel distance.

265. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: As Mr Strachan comes to respond to your points, I wonder if he could consider one of mine, which is, clearly discussions are continuing with Packington and with Solihull over the question of the incinerator or the waste transport, the dump –

266. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Waste recycling centre.

267. MR HALSEY: The waste dump.

268. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: The waste facility! Were considerations to continue with Packington and the farming interests and Solihull over whether Diddington Lane should be replaced as a continuous route; and were it decided that wasn’t necessary anymore, presumably you don’t have to do it even if you have the powers in the Bill, you don’t have to do it, and the question of closing – I’m not sure of the APs take out the proposal to close the lane – whether Solihull or the promoter could, within the powers of the Bill, close the lane if they chose to? It may be something to reflect on?

269. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Well, I will do my best to answer. I don’t know if everyone’s finished yet?

270. MR HALSEY: No, we’ve got a few more –

271. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Carry on, please? Forgive me for interrupting.

272. MR HALSEY: No, it’s okay – it’s nice to have a bit of interaction. Wanted to just respond to the promoter’s responses to our petitions, just to clarify once and for all. We’re probably repeating some of the issues here. The promoter response back to all of the resident’s petitions was that they claim to have engaged with us. They have not engaged with affected residents directly. They did initially, once the original Bill proposals were put forwards some years ago – it’s more by luck than judgement that we get to hear about some of these arrangements.

273. The second point: the assumption that traffic continues to use the A452 and the A45 going to and from the Birmingham interchange from Solihull. It will draw people directly to it. So that assumption, that the traffic carries on at the dual carriageways is, I believe, flawed, and I would like to understand how they modelled it; what the basis of their analysis is truly on; and who actually independently verified that analysis? Because in my lifetime, I've always had independent analysis, verification which says, 'I don't rely on some facts because you can manipulate facts to show anything'. I would like somebody to independently verify. Has the independent verification been done?

274. They claim that discussions were held with Solihull MBC, re AP2. Solihull Councillors who came to our action group fundamentally denied that had been the case; they had no knowledge of those AP2 proposals, and what I'd like to ask: where are the meeting records and the agreed decisions? I know AP4 was considered because that was in Solihull MBC's primary interest to do that.

275. The promoter thankfully accepts the AP2 proposal will locally affect the Solihull rural heartland landscape character by introducing that effectively diverted road, and HS2, but our argument is, why can't our situation be mitigated through closure of the lane to through traffic? That way, you at least attempt to mitigate the significant impact.

276. The other final thing on this slide is, how can the promoter guarantee moderate adverse – the word is adverse that it's covered – effects at year one of operation? Long-term tree planting schemes aren't the answer here. How do they guarantee that it will only have a moderate impact on that environment? I am interested to know their criteria for that evaluation as well, as are the whole action group team.

277. Can we have the next slide please? The other thing, the promoter claim that there's no likely cumulative effects for our community, but it does fail to recognise these inherent safety risks that will come about from lane reconstruction into an upgraded route; and alongside roads in the area that are non-compliant with highway specifications. AP2, incidentally, shows that work compound of Diddington Lane; that will require HGVs to use the Lane for load carrying, and it's in an area of substantial flooding – just this year – we're all aware of what happened up north, in Scotland, in Cumbria. We've probably had a 1-in-100 experience this year on the River Blythe because it's the worse I've seen it flood up and it's going to be positioned right on that

flood plain. So again, where are the lessons learned? How is the bunding going to be developed? How is this avoidance of flooding going to happen?

278. The AP2 line diversion will adversely affect our residual property values to the area, and our quality of life. We have to live there; we're in the middle of this consequence. Others will come, they will construct, they will go. But we are in the thick of this as residents. So therefore, we are concerned about this proposition impacting on the long-term basis as well as the short-term, through the construction phase, our quality of life.

279. Next slide please? Interestingly, I am sure cost is a key driver to HS2, and the promoter. It must be. The independent analysis: if you're going to invest what is effectively somewhere in the order for project costs of half a billion pound to lay one mile of HS2 track, surely the cost of thinking about alternative design options should not really figure significantly in this several millions, if it comes to that. The consequence for us is, there should be – if the Lane you want closed, that's the cheapest option, but there must be others that are less intrusive. We urge the Select Committee to ask the promoter they talk to local residents. I am more than happy to meet with whoever leads this lot, to look at how these changes are going to impact us, and not just talk to the Councils and Packington Estates who have vested interests, financial interest in some case, in the outcome. Please, we ask as an action group, can we be a bit more involved in this entire democratic process, so that we understand, like John was saying, in advance, on the Parish Council. We understand what's coming and we're not picking up the pieces after the event. It could avoid a lot of this. Your observations, Chairman, about the promoter saying, they don't want this – sorry, petitioners not wanting various options. Our view is, we would love to avoid that, at the outset.

280. Next slide please? Summary, I would just like to conclude. So, we foresee that there will be increased and enduring major safety, traffic volume, pollution, environmental issues, to all Hampton-in-Arden residents that are specifically associated with AP2 and the proposed Diddington Lane diversion. We do condemn the abject lack of consultation and collaboration and Packington Estates; and they take a very contemptuous attitude towards considering local resident views, in a consequence of this. Some of the legal letters we've received from lawyers beggar belief. I've been around long enough to know how you should address who are potentially customers of

this service. You should not address letters in the way that we receive them.

281. We request the Select Committee to direct the promoter and the Council, Solihull Council, to stop the drip-feed attrition of the local rural area into fervent urban blight –

282. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: We can read this as fast as you can read it; there's no need to –

283. MR HALSEY: Okay, fine. And we ask the committee to instruct the promoter to discuss and collaborate on alternative options. So, to conclude, I would just like to make a final comment, if I may?

284. CHAIR: You do get a final go after the promoter?

285. MR HALSEY: Yes, so, we aren't 'NIMBY-ists'. We are just ordinary villagers affected by the consequence of third parties who believe they can ignore us. We look to the Select Committee to right the wrong and adjudicate for fairness and common sense on this AP2 matter. Recent AP4 proposals and the actual petition from Packington Estates, where again, it's referenced no consultation had happened, shows and demonstrates it should be appropriate – it must be appropriate for the estates, Packington Estates, and the promoter, to reconsider their option to divert Diddington Lane and close it as proposed in the original Bill. Thank you for your time.

286. CHAIR: Mr Strachan, you answered the principle point about the road. Is there anything additional you want to...?

287. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): No, I was going to refer back to what I had said. I will address Sir Peter's question. I just wanted to correct one misapprehension, which was in the slides. There are a number of misapprehensions; I'm not going to repeat them. But there was a concern that construction traffic goes through Hampton-in-Arden, raised by one of the witnesses. I have previously shown you the slide P15337(2), just to be clear. We are not putting construction traffic through the Hampton-in-Arden –

288. MR HALSEY: No, but you are putting it up Diddington Lane.

289. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Let me correct the misapprehension which is being

repeated again. What we do – the residents of Diddington Lane are here, C and D. As you can see, we don't – we have identified here, whereas previously I think we were proposing to use some construction traffic, we have no proposed construction traffic along C and D. We access our sites on Diddington Lane from up at the A452, A and B, where we have five HGVs, and 36 cars and LGVs coming into this site. And we have some on J and K.

290. MS HUSSAIN: Can I ask how you stop traffic using that road?

291. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): Well, we've been through that before –

292. CHAIR: We have. The vehicles are tagged – the HGVs are satellite tagged, so they will know where most of the major vehicles are going. I am not pretending there won't be a problem with other traffic, but HS2 will know where most of their traffic is going.

293. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): So, what we're proposing doesn't have that effect which was of concern.

294. On the choice of Diddington Lane remaining open or closed: of course, I made the point, there are differences of views, and what you don't have today are the other views as to why we have promoted restoring the status quo. That's what, essentially, we are doing, having proposed closure and received strong objection from the farmers and the landowner, our proposal is to restore the status quo, but that of course does not prevent the highway authority exercising its powers and its functions to close Diddington Lane in the near future or in the distant, depending on whatever strong views are being expressed. They are of course in the position of being able to weigh and assess all the competing views in a way which this committee is not in the same position to do, having not heard for example, the Packington Estate objections, because we are promoting AP2. I appreciate there are strong views, and I think others will appreciate, or should appreciate, there are competing views to which we have responded in promoting AP2.

295. But ultimately, for the project, what we are simply doing by the Additional Provision, is to restore the status quo. The control of Diddington Lane both in its detailed designs as to how traffic travels along it will be a matter for Solihull, including of course, ultimately, if Solihull were to take the view that the points being made by

local residents should lead to is closure or restrictions, save for farm access or whatever it may be.

296. Sir Peter's question to me I think was about, if Solihull – if discussions continue and a view were reached that, actually, a different arrangement should be arrived at where it is closed or restricted to farm vehicles for example, then those changes to what's currently shown by way of an alignment could be achieved by way of traffic restriction orders or a stopping up order, by the local highway authority. I think that's the thrust of your question?

297. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Yes.

298. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): I just need to point out, under the Hybrid Bill of course, we weren't proposing to put a Diddington Lane bridge across in the same way we are here. We had an accommodation bridge for Pasture Farm which is just off to the screen here to the left, and we were stopping up Diddington Lane I think at this point, just here, and further down, at this point. So, the Hybrid Bill wouldn't give – would have given a different access arrangement. But AP2 in its current form doesn't preclude stopping up by the local highway authority if those discussions continue and the view is taken that that is the appropriate response.

299. I say that because I know there are strong views from Packington.

300. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Before – the procedure is you have a final word, but can I ask a question? I don't know what the difference is, rough difference, in costs might be between the AP proposal for the Diddington Lane bridge and the accommodation bridge which would've been provided otherwise, whether that's significant. One question is whether Solihull can reach agreement, or make a decision having consulted with various interests; I think what you've heard is that local residents didn't come into the consultation much if at all when the proposal came forward to re-open the idea of a continuous Diddington Lane, on the new alignment. If Solihull, with or without the promoters gets together the various interests, agricultural and Packington Estates – which is roughly, probably coterminous – and the local residents, and if they come to a view that either the accommodation bridge by itself would do, or some other arrangement would work, and were that to allow the promoters to change the scale of the works they are proposing of the bridge across the line, are there powers, or

is it open to the promoters in another place to say that agreement has been reached, and still have the powers to do what they want?

301. MR STRACHAN QC (DfT): I will have to check, but my instinctive reaction to that is, there are, because we don't need power not to pursue an Additional Provision, so if that's the nature of the question, we are putting forward an Additional Provision. If we are not going to exercise powers, which are enabled in the Additional Provision, that's not something we need to seek power for; it's a restraint of power. That's my initial reaction; I will check that to make sure I haven't said anything incorrect, but that's my initial reaction.

302. CHAIR: Okay, brief final comments?

303. MR HALSEY: I take issue with the point that counsel's making that it reverts the Lane back, with their proposal to what was there previously. It doesn't, because you've immediately upgraded, you've immediately re-shaped that Lane. If you were to show –

304. CHAIR: We're not going back through it.

305. MR HALSEY: Right, well my view is that the numbers of – the level of traffic volumes, Chairman, that they are demonstrating has more than doubled, associated with that proposal, to retain Diddington Lane; and we are desperately concerned that those figures are probably understated in terms of reality, once HS2 construction is complete.

306. CHAIR: Alright, thank you very much. Thank you all three of you, and safe journey back to the Midlands. All the other petitioners have settled in the corridor, so that's it for today. Order, order. Could you please withdraw and let us clear our thoughts?