

MINUTES OF ORAL EVIDENCE

taken before

HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMITTEE

on the

HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON – WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

Tuesday, 30 June 2015 (Afternoon)

In Committee Room 5

PRESENT:

Mr Robert Syms (Chair)
Mr Henry Bellingham
Sir Peter Bottomley
Mr Ian Mearns

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Timothy Mould QC, Lead Counsel, Department for Transport
The Right Honourable David Lidington, MP

Witnesses:

Mr Humphrey Tizard
Mr David Mundy
Mr Brian Adams
Ms Susan O'Brien, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr Douglas Mills, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr Philip Corthorne, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr Brian Crowe, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr John Riley, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr Henry Higgins, Hillingdon Borough Council
Ms Jane Palmer, Hillingdon Borough Council
Mr Ray Puddifoot, Hillingdon Borough Council

IN PUBLIC SESSION

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(At 14.00)

1. CHAIR: Order, order. Welcome back to the HS2 Select Committee. We have today the Right Honourable David Lidington, Member of Parliament for Aylesbury, who is going to give us a short, informal presentation on tunnels as they affect his constituency. We start by wishing you a happy birthday.

2. MR LIDINGTON: Thank you very much, gentlemen. I know that the Committee heard from my colleague, Cheryl Gillan, about tunnelling at her constituency recently and that she went into some detail about the arguments concerning protection of the Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty. So, whilst I shall refer to the AONB, I shall do my best not to repeat arguments that the Committee has already heard from Mrs Gillan. However, I want to make it clear that I associate myself with the arguments that she put forward on behalf of her constituents. I would also, just for the record, note that as my constituency includes a considerable section beyond the limit of the Chilterns AONB, that I look forward to a future occasion when I will have the opportunity to speak to my petitions that deal with concerns of the constituents living in those areas.

3. The point that I want to start with is that the single biggest issue raised in nearly 22,000 responses to the Environmental Statement consultation was the question of damage to the AONB and more than 8,000 responses asked for better environmental protection for the AONB by way of a longer bored tunnel.

4. Currently less than half of the AONB is fully tunnelled. I would add to that the fact that if you look at the section of the AONB that is in my constituency, none of that is due to be tunnelled, save for about half a mile of green tunnel, a cut and cover tunnel adjacent to the village of Wendover. There is no deep bored tunnel and, as the Committee will recall from their visit to my constituency a couple of weeks ago, the area of the Chilterns AONB south of Wendover towards Great Missenden is under current plans due to be afflicted by two viaducts and a considerable stretch of embankment and even where there are false cuttings proposed to try to limit the noise and visual intrusion, those will not extend to the pantographs and other apparatus connected with the line.

5. Could we put up slide 1167, please? This is just to refresh the Committee's memory here. The village of Wendover, which you can see just in the centre of the

slide, is passed by the HS2 route very closely and if we look to the north of Wendover you can see where those two circles are. That is roughly where the railway will emerge from the green tunnel where that blue circle is now.

6. If we go back south of the village we will see in the mauve shading just south of Wendover one section of viaduct there and then another section a bit further south, so, a considerable section of the line there that is going to be either in viaduct or, as you will see from the shading, on embankment. The actual area of the AONB finishes slightly north of Wendover roughly where that blue ring is drawn on the slide.

7. The cost, I know, of having a deep bored tunnel is something the Committee quite rightly will want to consider and indeed it is the argument that consistently transport ministers and HS2 Limited put forward as the prime reason for not providing in the plans for the AONB to be deep bore tunnelled beyond Amersham. As far as I am aware there has never been any suggestion that either HS2 Limited or the Department for Transport believe that the AONB will not be seriously adversely affected by the HS2 proposal; it is cost that has been the key element.

8. I think it is worth us recalling that the manifesto on which the present Government was elected said specifically, 'We will maintain protections for AONBs and we will build a new infrastructure in an environmentally sensitive way', and not just the manifesto commitments. The National Planning Policy Framework, which is supposed to be the starting point for any planning consideration in any particular case, says in paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and, scenic beauty in national parks, the Broads and areas of outstanding natural beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

9. The costs that we have seen for HS2 as a whole are £21.4 billion for Phase One including a contingency of £4.2 billion; Phase Two, £21.2 billion including a contingency of £8.5 billion, then rolling stock of £7.5 billion including a contingency of £1.2 billion. That adds up to the total of £50.1 billion including a contingency of £13.9 billion. These are figures given by the Secretary of State for Transport at the Despatch Box.

10. If we take the estimates that HS2 Limited has given us for the cost of any of the tunnelling options we will see that although they are large sums of money – I don't

pretend otherwise – they are small as a percentage of the cost of HS2. Even the long tunnel, if the costs given by HS2 Limited are not taking into account any of the money that would be saved through tourism and compensation not needing to be paid, would add up to less than 1% of the total cost of the line, just over £50 billion, and providing such a tunnel would save the single most important nationally designated natural area along the route.

11. The extended green tunnel option, on which you will hear from some of my constituents in Wendover at a later date, would of course cost no significantly less than any of the deep bored tunnel options. If we were to just look at this in terms of Phase One costs, even the costs estimated by HS2 Limited would amount to about 10% of the current contingency provided for by HS2 Limited in respect of Phase One.

12. The HS2 corridor makes up 191 square kilometres, which is roughly a fifth of the total landscape area, that is defining the corridor as the area directly affected by HS2. I just say for the record that the AONB has 44 million leisure visits every year and an income of £337 million. The Chilterns Conservation Board has commissioned an independent consultancy report that suggests that there would be a significant fall, perhaps £80 million, in the income, and an income from the AONB as a consequence of HS2 and they also estimate that there would be significant non-market savings in terms of continued benefits and income to the local economy in terms of compensation not needing to be paid to householders, farmers and so on if one of the deep bore tunnel options were selected.

13. I want to move on to the particular circumstances of the village of Wendover. Could we have slide 1165, please? The Committee will recall Wendover. It is a small market town with some unique features that deserve protection and a very lively community, as the Committee will remember from its visit to St Mary's Church and from the number of people who were waiting for us in Wendover Market during the day the Committee visited. Having a tunnel would first of all avoid the need for the Small Dean viaduct just south of Wendover, which on current plans would be 14 metres high – obviously the trains would add to that height – but I draw the Committee's attention in particular to the two circles shown on the map. You will recall the meeting in St Mary's Church, which is the blue circle. This is a Grade II listed building. As one of the residents said during the Committee's visit, increased soundproofing would help the

inside of the church. Only a tunnel would realistically allow people to enjoy the outside areas, the churchyard and, more particularly, the burial area which lies close to the proposed railway line, and I think the Committee will recall the noise simulations that were played during the visit to the church. I certainly recall that the noise impact on funeral services taking place in that burial area would be very significant indeed.

14. The church is not only used for services but also by many community groups, including Wendover Music Society and the Choral Society in the village. The church has 30,000 visitors a year and the local community recently raised and spent no less than £950,000 to bring this building up to concert standard. Understandably there is considerable shock and anger locally that that community commitment and investment should be put at risk through the impact of HS2.

15. The pink circle on the map shows the location of Wendover Campus School and the Committee will recall the presentation by the head teacher, again in St Mary's Church. This is a school that provides an education for secondary aged pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. These are young people – most but not exclusively boys – who present very challenging behaviour in the classroom and outside. I know that the principal of the school is very worried that the noise and distraction associated both with construction and operation will have a serious adverse effect upon the health, safety and education opportunities that the school has to provide. He said during his presentation that the school playing fields, like the burial ground at St Mary's Church, lie towards the line of route so they in particular would be very badly affected but there is no way in the present plans that the school buildings themselves could avoid serious impact.

16. I make a couple of other points about Wendover. The hydrogeological report about which you will hear more in due course from my constituents in Wendover argues that the Wendover Arm Canal and streams south of Aylesbury are at risk of being blocked by the construction work planned for HS2 on its current route and that this might cause flooding and also threaten the Weston Turvill Reservoir Site of Special Scientific Interest. That report, and the Committee obviously will have the chance to judge that in the future ---

17. CHAIR: Order, order. I am going to have to adjourn for 15 minutes for a

Division, to give you a rest, David.

Sitting suspended

On resuming –

18. CHAIR: Welcome back to the HS2 Committee after that interval. Mr Lidington?

19. MR LIDINGTON: Thank you. I had just finished talking about the hydrogeological report which the Wendover residents will be wanting to make representations about in greater detail. If I can turn to the question of Small Dean Viaduct, that would be located just to the south of Wendover, shortly before the railway line would enter the proposed green tunnel under current plans. This viaduct would be 14 metres high. The pantograph would take that up to 20 metres, mast to 22 metres. Quite frankly that would dominate the landscape and the lack of existing good quality noise mitigation combined with the height would cause noise blight across a wide area to the south of the village.

20. Perhaps we can look at noise impact on Wendover in a little more detail to try to give the Committee a bit of visual impression on slide 1172 first, please. This is HS2 Limited's own map published with the Environment Impact Assessment. The Committee will be familiar with the arguments as to whether or not these maps represent a true picture but I thought I would start with the official HS2 Limited ones. This is the area to the north of Wendover, so between Wendover and Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury, so the line will come out of the green tunnel, the end of that green and black dotted line, and then it would clearly start to have an immediate impact. I would draw the Committee's attention to just about half an inch further along from where the arrow is now. At this point there are houses on both sides of the line that would be directly affected.

21. If we can go to slide 1173, which is a similar map of the South of Wendover, again from HS2 Limited, we see the line approaching and then you get into a green tunnel and the noise impact, according to HS2 Limited, diminishes sharply but again here I would simply point out in passing that there are homes just above the line up here that are shaded yellow. There are houses below this line in Ellesborough Road that would be affected and if we go back along the line we will see if we look down here

another group of dwellings which, under current plans looking at HS2 Limited's own assessments, would be adversely affected.

22. Of course one of the arguments that there has been about noise impact assessments is that we are looking, when it comes to HS2 maps, at averages for noise impact which residents believe strongly reflect neither the maximum peak noise levels that they would experience nor the cumulative impact of what would, when the railway reaches peak levels of traffic, amount almost to a pulsing ribbon of noise coming and going with 19 trains an hour passing in each direction.

23. Could we look, just by way of comparison, please, at 1166? This is a map that Wendover HS2 has drawn up using figures published by HS2 Limited estimating the maximum noise levels and putting in contours, the best estimate that the residents can provide as to what they believe they would experience. Here you see that you would be looking at noise impact in considerable sections of the village of between 60 and 70 decibels, even taking account of the provision for the green tunnel in current plans.

24. If we just switch back to the previous slide for one second, it is worth making the point here that even the white shaded area of the map that on HS2's mapping covers most of the dwellings in the village, still allows for sound levels of up to an average of 40 decibels at night and 50 decibels during the day. That would, for many of those homes, particularly at night, represent a significant increase over the levels of noise that the village currently experiences.

25. To switch from the landscape and AONB to the question of people, the residents whom I represent, there will clearly be a serious and adverse impact on the quality of life on people in Wendover and the surrounding area if HS2 goes ahead on current plans. The various tunnel options offer a way in which to address those concerns and to give the local people of the Wendover area a much fairer deal whereas at the moment what they are being asked to accept is something that is deemed to be in the national interest, to suffer an enormous cost themselves in terms of quality of life and to have what is, in my view, insufficient provision in the way of mitigational compensation.

26. Of the tunnel options that have been submitted and on which you will be hearing detailed evidence, I would simply pass over quite briefly the so-called reaper tunnel, that is a shorter tunnel plan that affects Mrs Gillan's constituency only and I simply note that

that would have no impact on my constituents whatsoever. So, I have no objection to it per se. It does not at all address the issue that is of concern to me.

27. The options that would undoubtedly be the best for my constituents would be either the Chilterns long tunnel or the CRAG Tunnel. These are both long, deep bored tunnels. The Chilterns long tunnel is that which is proposed by the local county and district councils and the Chilterns Conservation Board. The costs claimed for that by HS2 Limited are £485 million but that would, as I said earlier, result in some £200 million of non-market benefits ranging from the lack of a need to pay compensation through to the savings you would get if you calculate on a monetary basis the impact of things such as traffic congestion, loss of tourism income and so on. There have been two reports by Peter Brett Associates, one in 2013 and an updated version in 2014, that value those non-market benefits at about £200 million. It is fair to say that those reports are disputed by HS2 Limited but Peter Brett Associates is a reputable company.

28. The CRAG tunnel follows the line of the existing route whereas the Chilterns long tunnel would seek to depart from the current route and take it slightly further away from Wendover and the London Road. The CRAG tunnel estimated cost – again, this is an HS2 Limited estimated cost – is about £349 million, and the length about 10.6 kilometres compared with 11 kilometres for the Chilterns long tunnel.

29. The point I make about both those deep tunnel options is that they would not only provide clear protection for Wendover for all the residents in the village but would have a significant impact in terms of improving the mitigation for the people living in the smaller settlements south of the village moving back towards Great Missenden. The Committee will recall standing with a group of local residents looking across the road and seeing the helium balloon that had been mounted on a trailer to show where the level of the embankment would be and the trains above that. Those people would face noise intrusion; they would have to endure construction and then, when the trains are operational, they would have not only noise impact but the visual intrusion, probably day and night, because of the need for the HS2 route to be lit along its length. The advantage of the deep bored tunnel options which the longer cut and cover tunnel option does not provide in anything like the same way is protection for those people in those small settlements between Wendover and Great Missenden.

30. The proposal for extension of the current green tunnel plan is one that Wendover residents themselves have developed and about which they look forward to speaking to the Committee. They use as the basis of their costs the costs of chainage, and so on, published by HS2 Limited. Again, one can argue about whether or not those are accurate but they have taken that for the purposes of comparison with the figures that HS2 Limited has published. What the Wendover residents are proposing in respect of this option is that to the north of the village the green tunnel should be extended by 500 metres from chainage of 55,000 to 55,500 at a cost of £22 million and to the south that there be a surface tunnel with a green roof from Bacombe Lane to the current site of the viaduct, an extra 700 metres, and an enclosure on the viaduct of 500 metres giving a total increase of 1200 metres to the south of the village. That would cost roughly £40 million additionally. So, if one extended the green tunnel in the way Wendover Residents have suggested, you would have a total cost of £62 million additionally. That, in the context of HS2's overall costs, is a very small sum indeed.

31. Overall, this would increase the proposed cut and cover tunnel from a length of 1100 metres to an overall length of 2800 metres and both proposals have a 100 metre cowl at each end. The benefits of any of the tunnel options would be a reduction in property blight that scopes about £50 million; a noise reduction for peak noise – Wendover residents reckon that there are more than 800 dwellings that would have an impact of more than 60 decibels at peak rather than average noise levels; and there would be protection both for St Mary's Church and the Wendover Campus School playing fields.

32. In fairness to my constituents in Stoke Mandeville as well as Wendover, I should finally draw the Committee's attention to a difference of view about the location of the northern portal of the tunnel. I think what would be helpful on this is if we could go back to the very first slide, which was number 67. At the moment, the plan is that the green tunnel, which is the yellow section adjacent to the village of Wendover, would end roughly where that blue ring starts. That is not the boundary of the AONB and the community in Wendover believe that in order to protect the village and AONB it should be moved further north roughly to where the red circle is, or a little beyond.

33. Villagers in Stoke Mandeville object to that. They say they are perfectly content with either a deep bored tunnel or a green tunnel finishing at the current location of the

northern portal. Their anxiety stems from a couple of points. First, they fear that if the tunnel is moved closer to Stoke Mandeville there would be an adverse noise impact on Stoke Mandeville village. Secondly, they argue that they have at the moment to face the prospect of a maintenance loop just north of the end of the green tunnel and if the green tunnel were extended further northwards then the maintenance loop itself would therefore have to be relocated close to Stoke Mandeville village, and that would have an adverse impact on the wellbeing and amenity of the people there.

34. There are also concerns in Stoke Mandeville that a longer tunnel, particularly a deep bore tunnel, would bring additional construction work and traffic closer to their parish and that there has not been any quantification of the structural issues involved with this option. What I would say to the Committee is that of course none of those arguments affect any judgment about extending tunnelling south of Wendover where there is no such argument, and I think if the Committee decides that it wants to look further at the case for an extension of either a cut and cover or a deep bore tunnel north of Wendover, that they should ask HS2 Limited to commission some independent noise analysis and other studies that would actually provide a common basis of fact on which the communities in both Wendover and Stoke Mandeville might be able to make a judgment, although the feeling is that there has been one single source of information that both communities equally feel they are able to trust.

35. Mr Chairman, I shall conclude my remarks simply by reiterating that I believe the case for additional tunnelling in this area is very strong indeed, both because of the national significance of the Chilterns AONB but even more because I believe that my constituents in and around Wendover deserve to have better mitigation than they are offered at the moment if they are to be asked to shoulder a very heavy burden, something that is considered to be in the national interest. Thank you.

36. CHAIR: Thank you very much. Any questions from the Committee? Sorting out the European Union sounds a lot easier. Presumably you are going to comment when the petitioners themselves come and make their cases, Mr Mould?

37. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes, the only point I would make, which I think Mr Lidington touched on but is perhaps worth adding a little emphasis to is that if we are to contemplate a tunnel of the length that would serve the interests of his

constituents in Wendover, as he has mentioned, we will have to find a large site at the northern portal of that tunnel from which to construct it and there is no getting away from that. Where that site is, of course, might be a matter for debate, but I don't think that those reports he has mentioned have really faced up to that and they need to if they are going to have a credible case to bring forward to the Committee, I would suggest.

38. CHAIR: Okay.

39. MR LIDINGTON: I think the only thing I would say and I don't quarrel with what Mr Mould says about the need for that issue to be considered, is that of course because HS2 Limited have not wanted to consider additional tunnelling beyond the green tunnel, there has not been the sort of modelling or environmental impact study that would be needed under those circumstances.

40. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, we have published reports which set out our analysis of those two tunnels. They are on the website and they do address that issue.

41. CHAIR: Thank you, David, eloquent as usual. We look forward to hearing your constituents in due course. Now we move back to Mr Brian Adams and Mr Tizard, who we interrupted for lunch. We'd just finished the tunnel.

Debra Marskell and others (cont'd)

42. MR TIZARD: Mr Chairman, we had got as far as saying is that our first and preferred option is to have a single tunnel without intervening construction sites all the way from West Hythe to Northolt and that our next preferred option would be to have a small construction site in Ickenham but using the current TfL sidings rather than build a new railhead. We do believe that that would be a substantial improvement in terms of the construction traffic and construction blight that would occur if we stuck with the original plans to put that railhead between Breakspear and Harvil Road.

43. It is with a lot of reluctance that we then move on to plan C, which is to consider the circumstances under which you wouldn't allow a tunnel, but the benefits of then again using the TfL sidings instead of building a new railhead. You will hear from TfL later on, and they will put forward a convincing argument that this is not only a feasible proposition but also one which will confer substantial benefits in terms of construction

by mitigation. I say we are reluctant to go down this route because, of course, we will still have the operational blight and, more than that, the construction blight will be worse for us in the sense that it is much more likely that there will have to be extensive works to services along Ickenham High Road and Breakspear Road if you take the service route than if you tunnel 30 metres underground.

44. Now, Mr Mould has said, 'Well, you might have to have service work even if it was at 30 metres', but I would just like you to consider, members of the Committee, that that isn't very likely is it? We know that. So, in addition to our first two scenarios using the tunnel we would like you to consider that alternative, but it is very, very much a last resort.

45. I would just like to go back to the tunnel because we have heard a very eloquent presentation from Mr Lidington about the impact of the railway on the Chilterns and the areas of outstanding natural beauty and the operational blight on those villages. I would like to point out that in terms of a plea, and I do not want in any way to denigrate what is a sound plea for a tunnel in the Chilterns, the situation in Ickenham is of a different order of magnitude. It is not just that we will have the operational blight. Okay, we are not a designated area of natural beauty but we consider our green fields to be beautiful. We do not want them blighted and, of course, we have a very large community which will be affected by the noise but the construction blight is the one that adds a completely new and different dimension to this. The construction blight will cause devastation to the economy of this part of West London and that cannot be underestimated.

46. I understand that the difference between the cost of the tunnel as opposed to the current planned overland route is of the order of £300 million but that does not take into account the socioeconomic blight nor the ongoing operational blight and the cost of that. When you take those things into account, what we are saying is that the tunnel really does provide value for money when you include in that value assessment the quality of life of 'Ickenhamers' and the economy of a large part of West London numbering tens of thousands of people.

47. CHAIR: Thank you very much. Mr Mould? I presume you have finished, Mr Tizard?

48. MR TIZARD: Yes.

49. MR MOULD QC (DfT): It wasn't I who explained the problems with seeking to construct and fit out the Northolt Tunnel and the wider HS2 railway from a construction depot at a TfL site in Ruislip; it was Mr Smart speaking as the engineering director for the project who explained to you in very trenchant terms why that was not by any means an acceptable approach as an alternative to the proposed Harvil Road depot. When we heard that evidence and we heard somebody with appropriate expertise and qualifications say how those concerns might be overcome, that is to say the engineering tunnelling witness called on behalf of the London Borough of Hillingdon, he had no answer to Mr Smart's concerns. There is as yet no answer. I heard it said just now that TfL are going to provide an answer. Well, we shall see. If they do then it will be very interesting to hear it but there isn't as yet an answer to the fundamental problem that realistically one cannot fit out a railway, the Northolt tunnel and then out towards the Chilterns from the Ruislip depot. That means that the tunnel that has been being advocated repeatedly during the last few weeks does not provide a solution to the problem that it is claimed as a solution to, that is to say the need to bring substantial quantities of construction traffic through the roads of Ickenham. Nor does it provide a solution to that problem if one assumes that there is not a tunnel, and we have explained the reasons for that as well.

50. So, whilst I understand that all those who appear before you would like it very much indeed if it did provide a solution to the need to have the construction site at Harvil Road and the need in the early year or two of the project to bring substantial quantities of material in to create the trace via Harvil Road and other roads in Ickenham, it does not do so as far as we can see.

51. Therefore we are left with looking for other solutions, as the witness expressed it. We have given a commitment to the London Borough of Hillingdon to seek to review the operation of those key junctions and, depending on the findings of that review, to seek to provide an amelioration of their operation to improve their operation. You also know that we are looking again at the possibility of a haul road across land to the west of the Uxbridge Golf Course, which was raised by a petitioner last week in which I said we were in the process of reviewing. We had discounted it initially but we are having another look at it and I have asked the project to put me in a position to be able to report back to you on that during the course of next week – that is my ambition – and the

feasibility of that. But that at least does not carry with it the presently insoluble difficulties that would be created by trying to construct and fit out this railway via an adit south of the TfL depot at Ruislip.

52. The only other point I wanted to make is first of all in terms of air quality, and you heard from Mr Miller on this. We recognise the toolkit method but the approach which was taken by the petitioners did not account for dispersion and, as Mr Miller explained, that is a vital factor to take into account when one is considering air quality effects. There will be further detailed information provided on air quality in the supplementary environmental statement that is to be published, I think, in the second half of July.

53. Then finally, true it is that I did not challenge in detail the traffic evidence given by Mr Cable. The reason that I did not challenge that is quite simple. Mr Cable gave a picture of the existing position on Harvil Road. We have sought to model and predict the operation of Harvil Road at the time when we need to bring construction traffic on to it and we have based that on both surveys and on a well-known model which is an established model used by TfL which takes account of the range of transport facilities on a multi-modal basis that will exist at the time when HS2 is actually bringing that traffic on to the road.

54. So, it was not necessary for him to challenge Mr Cable's evidence of what happens now. What is more relevant is to seek to model and to understand what the position is going to be when we come to build the railway in three or four years' time and beyond.

55. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: When do you think there would be saturation?

56. MR MOULD QC (DfT): When factors such as Crossrail will have come on-stream and they will begin to draw people along that corridor down to a mass transit railway project. There are other matters as well but that is the most obvious.

57. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: I only interrupt you again to say that it would be ludicrous to build Crossrail without expecting to have some effect on traffic.

58. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, quite, no doubt and so I hope it is fair for me there to draw attention to that as being a component of the model which is looking forward a

few years rather than looking at what happens today. No doubt it will be reassuring for everybody in the room to know that at the present time we don't have to take traffic along Harvil Road.

59. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Well, the problem is the north-south traffic, and Crossrail goes east/west.

60. MR MOULD QC (DfT): But it provides a service which goes all the way out to Maidenhead, as you know, and so that is the point. I thought I had made that point because Mr Cable made a careful presentation, if I may say so, and I did not want it to be thought that I am being... Thank you.

61. CHAIR: Mr Adam?

62. MR TIZARD: We come back to the fact that the relevance of this from the strategic model is that it does not look at the micro-position in this particular part of West London and so it cannot be relied on, with respect.

63. The other thing is that the impact of Crossrail is completely spurious. None of the traffic flows that we are talking about will be affected in any way by Crossrail, which is not only east/west but is way to the south. So, that is clearly not a term of argument. We will come back to the feasibility of the TfL siding option. We are not going to go into any great detail but we do know that they have, and TfL knows something about tunnelling because they are responsible for the Crossrail project itself and they have done similar fit outs in Bond Street and so forth which have shown that that sort of route is possible. But we won't go any further on that because you will be hearing from their experts very shortly and they will show you that that is the case.

64. So, the tunnel is an option and the TfL siding is still an option. They are both feasible; it's just a question of whether there is the will for HS2 to look openly at these possibilities and realise that they are actually solutions to the problems that they will definitely have if they try to put a major construction site where they are proposing to do at the moment.

65. CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

66. MR ADAMS: Can I just add one footnote. This is the end of residents from

Ickenham – not quite the end. Just on behalf of ten and a half thousand people, the many residents who have participated over the past four years in the community work that we have done, we are very grateful to the Committee. You have made it a more friendly experience than we ever anticipated a year ago and we obviously are looking for a good deal. Thank you.

67. CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr Adams. We move on to the next petitioners.

68. MR MEARNS: I can hear Jim Morrison sing for some reason.

Three Rivers District Council

69. CHAIR: We are just going to have a quick 10-minute statement, as I understand, from Three Rivers Council. Mr Mundy, you represent Three Rivers District Council and you wish to make a statement before the Committee?

70. MR MUNDY: I do, indeed, sir, if I may. This is an agreed statement that has been agreed with the promoter over the last few days and if Mr Mould is happy I am proposing to read it out on behalf of both of us.

71. The following statement is agreed between the promoter and Three Rivers District Council. The promoter and Three Rivers District Council have made significant progress on the issues within their petition such that we do not consider that the Committee needs to hear from Three Rivers District Council today.

72. Three Rivers District Council welcomes the following assurances offered by the promoter: engagement with the council on the restoration scheme at the southern portal of the Chiltern Tunnel; the offer of membership of a Colne Valley panel to discuss mitigation and restoration schemes in the regional park with other local planning authorities and interest groups, and commitment to complete the temporary slip roads from the M25 in accordance with the arrangements as outlined in our offered assurance to reduce traffic impacts on local roads.

73. These assurances and the explanations provided by the promoter on other matters in correspondence dated 15th, 24th and 25 June provide the necessary comfort to Three Rivers District Council ensuring that these issues do not warrant further discussion in

front of the Select Committee.

74. For the Committee's information, the more significant of those other matters are confirmation of the levels of the earthworks forming the West Hythe embankment that were assumed for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment which led to the Environmental Statement; confirmation that best available techniques for control of air pollution for process plant which would fall under Part 3.1 of the Environmental Permitting Regulations such as concrete batching plants, will be considered for the compounds within the district during planning of local environmental management plans, and confirmation that except for in emergencies, any of the work taking place outside normal working hours not including the ground maintenance, will be agreed with the council in compliance with Section 61 of the Controlled Pollution Act 1974.

75. Three Rivers District Council would like to put on record that it is supportive of the work of the Local Authority Noise Consortium and it is deferring some of its noise concerns to that group. If necessary, construction noise issues will be raised by the London Borough of Camden as the lead local authority on this matter.

76. Further information has been provided by the promoter on all other items raised in Three Rivers District Council's petition, such that the council does not need to address the Select Committee on these issues. There has been constructive dialogue between Three Rivers and the promoter since the Hybrid Bill was submitted. In recognition of the assurances offered, the further clarification provided by the promoter and the positive outcome of our bilateral discussions, Three Rivers District Council will not now be appearing before you to present the cases originally scheduled. Thank you, sir.

77. CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed. Finally we come to Hillingdon Borough Council.

Hillingdon Borough Council

78. CHAIR: How long have you three served on Hillingdon Borough Council?

79. MR MILLS: Between us, 47 years.

80. MS O'BRIEN: I'm the youngest.

81. CHAIR: I'm glad that's clear.

82. MS O'BRIEN: Just for clarification.

83. MR MILLS: I was going to ask for our A114 number 3 to be put up first of all as our starting point, if I may. This is our ward, Ruislip Manor in the London Borough of Hillingdon with a population of just over 9,500. We are all residents of Ruislip. I myself am a resident of Roundways and therefore my back garden faces the Northolt tunnel below my ground and nine metres below my soil is going to be compulsorily acquired in accordance with the HS2 letter that I have received.

84. Susan lives in West End Road, which I think you have heard mentioned several times and is a key element of the infrastructure, not just for our ward but for the northern part of Hillingdon, a part of the A40.

85. So, we are petitioning both as local residents and indeed on behalf of all our residents. If we could go to number 4, please, we tried to identify here, and again you would have already seen evidence from Hillingdon's traffic highway engineers, the importance of our road structure. I just want to emphasise that what you can't see on this map is the good number of people who live north of Ruislip in the north part of it, and those that live in Eastcote, Northwood, and Northam Hills and who themselves require access either down Swakeleys Road or West End Road to be able to get on to the A40 and go about their business.

86. Whilst I am on that, may I just reiterate a previous comment that has been made. I would ask the Select Committee to seriously consider that if HS2 are saying that Crossrail is part of their modelling solution, then maybe their modelling solution has been fed the wrong information because anyone who lives north of the A40 travelling down these roads which are already quite tight would then have to make their way to Uxbridge and then on to Hayes to be able to join access to Crossrail. The London Borough of Hillingdon respectfully argues that although Crossrail is a great thing for us, it is very much aimed at the southern end of our borough rather than those of us in the subject matter of the day, which is north of the A40, and that is before we get to the point of absolutely overloading these roads.

87. I am afraid that we shall be reiterating and reinforcing many of the comments that

you have heard from individual petitioners because, like them, we have the local knowledge of witnessing the effects of any disruption along the A40 and what it does to West End Road, Swakeleys Road, Victoria Road, and to everyone trying to find their way around the northern part. Indeed, the Police Borough Commander, on arrival, couldn't understand why our response times in Hillingdon were so bad until he personally travelled from the north of the borough to the south and vice versa and even with his flashing lights he realised with so few crossover points across the A40 and so much traffic directed down it, it is an absolute dilemma for his officers to be able to meet their response times if they happen to be given a call on the other side of the A40.

88. CHAIR: Presumably that means criminals can't get out of Hillingdon quickly either?

89. MR MILLS: We would like to believe so. Our record on burglary is improving. Can I now go, please, to number 6? Mr Mould will be delighted to know that we are joining with the many other sensible well thought through people in the north of Hillingdon who strongly believe that the tunnel extension beyond West Ruislip through Ickenham to the Colne Valley is not out of consideration and we do therefore fully support the evidence that has been given by those with a much more professional basis. Again, I would ask the Select Committee, I think the question is has HS2 actually answered the exam question themselves properly or have they really dumped it with a quick solution that says, 'No, we don't want to do that'? Is the Select Committee happy that HS2's numbers for the apparent cost of a new tunnel are in the same proportion as the costs for the Northolt tunnel or do they suddenly escalate to help prove a particular point from their perspective?

90. Our view is that the amount of effort that has gone into considering this, I regret to say, on behalf of residents, has been a pooh pooh exercise: 'You can't possibly do that; you don't know what you're talking about', rather than a considered, well thought through examination of the detail. We are delighted and consider it a significant intervention that the Mayor of London and our new local Member of Parliament for our ward, part of the Uxbridge South Ruislip constituency himself is backing it, as per the letter which the Committee was given on 8 June, I believe. Indeed, tomorrow we have confidence that TfL will be able to demonstrate, because of their experiences and their knowledge and the discussions which we have been having with them as a borough

council, that the impossibility and the unworkability that Mr Mould is continually trying to push out there is actually, with an open mind, a willingness and a detailed consideration a practical solution to all the misery, concern and fears that not only the residents of Ruislip Manor have expressed to us but the residents of Ickenham and others that you have been hearing this morning and indeed Harefield before.

91. As a borough we are standing united because we understand that what happens in one of our wards impacts equally and severely in all our other wards as it feeds through to our particular roads. So, I think that significant intervention from the Mayor and TfL in support is something which I am sure that the Select Committee will give due consideration to.

92. If I can go to seven, please, we have tried to sum up and again none of this will probably be new to the Select Committee, what the residents of Ruislip Manor are telling us. Indeed, you have had some of our residents, and indeed some of my neighbours, sitting here giving you their personal account as to how it is going to feel for them, the excavation of tunnels and adverse settlement, and what will that mean for their buildings. I will come back to settlement later, and the sheer confusion that HS2 are having in terms of speaking to residents, leaving some with a completely different answer and impression to others, and the need for that to be absolutely sorted out and a greater clarity and communication to be determined.

93. The noise, vibration and prolonged disruption will cause continued nuisance, not just from what is going on below the ground but the whole of this disruption across the whole of Ruislip going into Ickenham, as we again saw some evidence of this morning. All of that has a knock-on effect and will severely influence the residents of Ruislip Manor, and especially those who need to use West End Road as their in and out to go about their normal business.

94. Water discharge is an area which is of great concern. I have seen some of the HS2 documents in recognition of different issues. I am not certain that they are aware of some of the water discharge problems that crop up on a from time to time basis when we have particularly severe weather around the Ruislip Gardens Bridge area near to the station or, indeed, along the Network Rail trench that is at the back of some of my neighbours' gardens where, if it is so bad, it goes as far as into their houses where they

have to have private pumps to keep the water in their gardens below a certain level, something which they manage themselves. They are extremely concerned about what the impact of additional water discharge may cause.

95. As to heavy goods vehicles, we have heard talk of 1000 vehicles going through Ickenham and the impact of that. It sounds quite good because it is not going to come down to where we are in our part of the manor but the reality is it is the displacement on top of what is already congested, almost saturated roads like West End road is and it will not be for a few weeks; it will be continuous over a long period of time. It is that multiplier effect that causes us to have a lot of concern and, quite frankly, residents tell me and I have been to some of the HS2 meetings that they have held in our area, that there is a distinct feeling of having been fobbed off with, 'Don't ask that question; it will be all right on the night' kind of answers. 'A traffic management plan will be drawn up.' Quite honestly, as to the traffic management plan, as is evidenced by the comment on Crossrail, if they are starting from there, they are not examining the right questions. They are misunderstanding the starting point of how serious and big a problem it is and how difficult it is for the London Borough of Hillingdon to be able to manage the existing traffic that has been generated in that area. As a borough that is committed to putting its residents first, if we had found a solution that was easy we would have implemented it so HS2, you don't just need a model but a magic wand as well.

96. I would like now if I may, please, to go on to one of the issues about settlement, which I mentioned earlier and the whole thing about who gets compensation for what. Who applies? Mr Mould apparently last week told one of my residents, 'You are entitled' – I need to find the piece of paper for this – 'to apply for the Need to Sell Policy', but they are now being told in terms of the documentation that we have that reading the documentation that has come out of HS2 and forgive me if there is a confusion but this does need to be cleared up ---

97. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Just to save you time and to save us time, no one is excluded from applying but not all applications will be accepted.

98. MR MILLS: Yes, I think that is the problem, so because residents in my area are, in essence, under the bored tunnel, they do not qualify so to be told that they can apply for it is a bit disingenuous, is it not?

99. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: There are many important things to talk to us on but the fact is that many people in London have tunnels underneath their homes and don't have their home devalued because of it.

100. MR MILLS: I think what I am asking for is because residents are now confused as to what does and doesn't apply, as part of the improvement we would ask the Select Committee and indeed HS2 to take up the challenge of writing to each of the individual houses and occupants individually and saying, 'Where you are in relation to what we are planning, this means that you are entitled to this', or, 'You are not entitled to that'. We have situations where residents who live not far apart are getting conflicting information and when they talk they will say, 'That's not what I have been told. That's not how I have had it explained to me by the QC'. So there is a need for much better clarity of communication. Indeed, as one of those residents myself, I would like to think I am reasonably well educated and able to understand what is going on. However, it is sometimes extremely difficult to understand what does actually apply to us and whether they mean the whole of my demise or just a garage that may be close to it, whether they mean the extension that may have extended into it or the original house. I simply ask the Select Committee to consider that HS2 should provide greater clarity to avoid what has become absolute confusion and the development of more urban myths.

101. CHAIR: We are clear and HS2 did undertake the other day that they would be writing to people who came into the Deed of Settlement area. I think that is true and that is what was said the other day, so there will be more clarity although we did hear also the other day that something had been missed in terms of communication within the 30 metres but we understand your point.

102. MR MILLS: I am sorry just to make sure I understand it, will they be writing to every resident so myself as a resident?

103. CHAIR: Those residents within 30 metres of the tunnel.

104. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Of the centre of the tunnel?

105. CHAIR: The centre. It would be more confusing if they went to every resident.

106. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: The centre of the nearest tunnel?

107. MS O'BRIEN: It's baffling, isn't it?

108. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: No, it's not. It's very simple. But I can understand how it would be baffling to a resident of yours who hears one person and then there's conversation and then things don't appear to be exactly the same. Sometimes that's life; sometimes it can be explained. But I think the Councillor's made the point and we might want to hear the next one.

109. CHAIR: The deed of settlement is one of the simplest things. It purely is a question of measurement. If all this project was purely a question of measurement it would be a lot easier to deal with. Right, carry on.

110. MR MILLS: The similar issue, I'm afraid, about the condition surveys of properties that are backing onto the tunnel. Again, all the properties in my own road, Roundways, Almond Close, Lawn Close and Herlwyn Avenue which are actually going to be backing onto the tunnel, there is uncertainty and confusion about what the documentation is saying. Indeed, some residents are finding it hard to actually realise there was documentation because the letters that one got from HS2 telling us that land was going to be acquired and this was going on then refers to websites. Again, I would ask for absolute clarity whether it's possible for HS2 to write to everyone and say 'yes, you know that your property is going to back on to the bore tunnel; well the issue of the conditions surveys means that in your case, yes, we will come and carry out a survey because we think that you are close enough'; another case, 'no, we won't; we don't think you're close enough'; or 'if you want to pay for one yourself we'll consider it'. Again, there is absolute spread of opinion of what HS2 have been telling people or what people think HS2 have been telling them along that whole stretch of what must be 120 or 130 residents. And again, as local councillors, we would just please seek absolute clarity of what is actually intended and not an exercise in trying to find it out piece by piece. But I'm grateful for the Select Committee in understanding the central theme of what we're trying to convey.

111. I'm now ready for slide 8 please. I'm not going to go through all these in any great detail because lots of them are what we're seeking. And I know that there are plans. We are aware that HS2 are trying to address some of them. Hopefully the assurances that have been received and what has been said, a number of these will

provide safeguards. I will reiterate the point that was made earlier that residents are concerned about compliance with codes of practice. Again, that's great if it's done. When it isn't done, how easy it's going to be – and I think this morning there was guidance about a telephone line. I just hope it's got lots of operators because I sense it will get used quite a lot because people are going to be very concerned.

112. I just want to look at the fourth bullet there. This issue about water discharge if I may just go back. Forgive me because I'm not an expert in terms of the legislation line for line but there is this great concern, as I mentioned earlier, about additional water discharge which could supplement what happens from time to time anyway causing damage; and, again, I was conscious this morning the Ickenham gentlemen making the comment about he already does face flooding from time to time and has to deal with his insurance company. Under the law of tort I am aware that there would be a strict liability for bringing something onto a land which is unnatural use. A tunnel clearly is an unnatural use of land and should there be discharge thereafter there would be a strict liability for providing indemnity. I make the point particularly that we're talking about indemnity for both the physical damage, which will be quantified quite easily, but also any consequential loss that may arise whether it be an individual resident or whether it would be a business. Now, I know in legal terms the words 'no ifs or buts' may be difficult to draft but it's along those lines of assurance that we would be looking for absolute strict liability should subsequent water damage occur and clearly had been done because of the construction of the tunnel and to supplement and add to the woes that residents already suffer when nature takes its course. That's the point which I particularly wanted to make there.

113. I am now willing to move to number 9. And at this point I'm likely, with your permission, to dovetail with my colleague, Councillor Susan O'Brien, because you will have seen this particular diagram yesterday as elements of the utility work and my colleague produced a petition on behalf of the shopkeepers. So we're supplementing that in terms of our residents generally.

114. The point we're trying to make here... and I appreciate again that recognition has been made by HS2 of some of the issues and some of the concerns and the start – I use that word advisedly – of assurances have been given, first last week to the petitions presented by the local schools, yesterday said to the petition presented by

Councillor O'Brien. It would be very nice if we could just do it in one go rather than having to do it chip by chip, bit by bit, fighting each which I think actually residents would say sums up HS2's approach to local communities: don't tell them too much until they ask the right questions. And that has been one of the major, major concerns about HS2's approach to this. We would like more transparency; we would like more openness; we would like the assurances to be full and proper, not bit by bit.

115. MR MEARNS: It does seem appropriate because tomorrow is the 100th anniversary of the commencement of the Battle of the Somme so that was an attritional war by nature. Maybe you've got that in mind. I'm not sure.

116. MR MILLS: I've seen the letter of assurance that has been sent to petitioners for the local schools and on one of it it confirms 'phasing utility works so as to minimise the overall impact due to associated traffic restrictions in the area'. Now, that is encouraging but I do believe there's enough – I have to use the word advisedly – wriggle room in terms of the opening paragraphs that talk about reasonable, practicable, etc. Because when we know what we're actually talking about there is going to be major utilities works – which I appreciate HS2 are going to commission to undertakers to carry out but HS2 as the commissioner needs to make sure they do give us these assurances – when there's work going to be taking place along West End Road, works taking place along Bridgwater and works taking further down West End Road just off Station Approach and Long Drive, the consequence of all those three works happening together on top of all the displaced traffic, because their lorries are pounding their way through Ickenham and what have you, will be even more of a disaster. So if the assurance is that they will phase it, can we not have please in the letter precise wordings that say 'the works at', 'the works at' and 'the works at' will be done at separate times? Because in my commercial life letters of intent, letters of comfort, letters of assurances are great until they actually have to be tested, and then of course individuals change and individuals say 'well, that wasn't actually what we meant' or 'my interpretation of it is slightly different'. Let us please be absolutely precise again with our communications. Let's be absolutely clear to residents that those three pieces of work, yes, they would appear to have to be undertaken but they're undertaken in three separate stages; and let the letters say at no time will the phasing of that site, that site and that site be happening at the same time. I believe the assurances don't go far enough; they need to be

strengthened.

117. CHAIR: Councillor Mills, you no doubt have a lot of experience of local government. When the legal officers of Hillingdon Borough Council respond to another entity or to a resident do they give absolute assurances that things will be done or do they put things like 'reasonable'? I mean, I'm perfectly sure that if I looked through the letters of the Hillingdon legal department you'd see similar letters that you're getting from HS2.

118. MR MILLS: I knew you were going to ask that or someone was going to ask that. I was expecting him to ask that. The answer, I believe – and I do believe that this is the difference – of course it's not unusual to have 'reasonable / practicable' in these kinds of arrangements. It's not unusual to accept there are exceptional circumstances. But when you know you have reasonable foreseeability, *Wagon Mound (No 1) and (No 2)* I'm sure you're familiar with, reasonable foreseeability, then you have a determining factor that I think that, yes, even Hillingdon would be thinking 'hang on, if we know it's going to happen let's see if we can do something about it'. And the difference is because Hillingdon thinks 'residents first' and HS2 haven't quite made that leap of faith, which I strongly suggest they do, that's what we need to do: look at this from a resident's point of view, not top down. You get so much more satisfaction of delivering what you want and carrying residents with you. I think that's the answer I wanted to give.

119. If I may move very quickly on to 10. Again, I do believe – and my colleague will confirm this – that the need to keep at least one side of West End Road open so that we can have some kind of movement of traffic has been accepted. Again I'd just to reiterate those residents who live around my part of the world or further down just beyond Ruislip Gardens Railway Station, in order to get to important places like Hillingdon Hospital you need to get up West End Road. For those without cars, public transport is important. You can't get to the Central Line from our part of the world to get to Hillingdon Hospital; you have to get a bus. And if all the traffic is flowing this way all the time then there's going to be a knock-on effect about people going about their ordinary lives to be able to go and do simple things, but getting to the hospital is going to be made very complicated and I'm bound to say, again, because of the lorries passing through Ickenham and the displaced traffic that is just a complication even further.

120. I just now want to move straight to 13. Obviously the consequence of tunnelling and compulsory acquired land is going to be about the impact on each household. And I do understand that it may vary from one to the other but collectively all residents feel that they're going to suffer significantly in terms of that and it's about reassuring them that everything will be done that is possible to be done to give them a comfort. I would hope that the Select Committee consider to give assurance to residents that there will be restrictions on what else can be compulsory acquired, having found that their sub-soil is going to be; and that people don't live in the fear, in the worry or the potential of a double blight that HS2 may wish to come along and compulsory acquire even more for the purposes of their project.

121. Particularly in terms of the settlement deeds, it's not easy to understand. As I said, I actually had difficulty finding it on the website, and I think I'm reasonably au fait with those things. Again, I just want to reinforce this point about people need to have a very clear understanding of what it is that they're being asked. But there is absolute essential for clarity and I can't make that point any stronger.

122. Was there anything else on the roads that you wanted to add before I go on to my final slide?

123. MS O'BRIEN: I think what I wanted to add in connection with the settlement deeds – and I agree with the Chairman when he said that there is clarity about the settlement deeds of settlement – I think the issue is that our residents are still very concerned about surveys. Having to pay for surveys themselves is ridiculous. We were told that a photograph of the back of the building is good enough at the end of the meeting yesterday. And that does make sense. I understand that, you know, take a photograph every six months and see what the difference is. But I don't know what the surety is as to would that be regarded as just cosmetic damage or would it be regarded as 'oh, yes, there is clear change in the structure of your building'. I'm not too sure how many people would fall into this category but a full structural survey costs around about £2,000 inclusive of VAT; and, again, I think it's a very small number in the grand scheme of things so again give a very small group of people the surety instead of them having to fork out £2,000 for something they didn't have to do five years ago or 10 years ago. So I just wanted to make that point.

124. MR MILLS: I think it's fair for the Select Committee to know we're not judging HS2 here in terms of their communication skills when we're making the point about their communication skills. Many residents believe it's confusion; a number believe it's deliberate misleading. And that is not good in terms of a way in which to be able to enter into what will be legally binding documents on both sides. So we need to restore goodwill and HS2 need to recognise that they've been awful. HS2 need to recognise that they are disrupting people immensely. They need to recognise they are potentially wrecking not just people's properties but their lives. And they just need to look at it from a resident's point of view.

125. My final slide hasn't been much mentioned today but deserves mention: HOAC. You've had good presentations on HOAC. It's in the northern part of our borough, Harefield, so physically quite a long way away from the residents where we live. But we are fully supportive of it. And I just want to reinforce and I'll give you a personal example. My wife runs, and has run for 40 odd years, a guide company. She has taken many young people and encouraged scouts as well as her guides to use HOAC because of its facilities, because for some of them they never have had the opportunity or will never get the experience of being able to sail or to do the things that HOAC have been able to do. So I don't want the Committee to believe that HOAC is just a unique feature for the northern end and the lucky people at Harefield: it is a Hillingdon landmark; it is a Hillingdon feature that many residents have enjoyed and wish to continue. We've heard the discussions going on about an alternative facility. Quite honestly, I am going to finish with our old friend, Tina: we do not believe there is an alternative. There is no alternative to HOAC: it is unique. Whatever you try to replace it with will not be the same and I believe that that in itself is a very strong message to go with all the others as to where we came in: the tunnel beyond West Ruislip is a logical, sensible, reasonable and deliverable proposition that the people of Hillingdon deserve for having to go through what HS2 are proposing in the national interest. Thank you.

126. CHAIR: Thank you very much, Councillors. A lot of these, Mr Mould, we've almost done to death but I'm very pleased to hear from the three councillors. Is there any little points you want to raise, particularly about the letter on the deed of settlement and what further information there will be there for residents?

127. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes, and clearly a simple guide, if you like, to the basics

of the settlement policy is something that one can see is worth pursuing. And I have in mind, for example, that a guide of that kind was produced towards the end of the parliamentary process on the Crossrail Bill while the Bill was before the House of Lords Committee. And it may be that we can advance the process with something of that kind here whilst this Committee is still sitting. I'll take instructions on that and see if we can do that.

128. CHAIR: Okay, good.

129. MR MILLS: For the avoidance of doubt, because obviously my residents are going to ask me, is there a kind offer which I do believe is movement of encouragement to be individually addressed to each of the residents or only those who sort of asked a question?

130. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, I can't make an offer now because although I'd like it if this was my personal Bill, it isn't; I'm instructed on behalf of the Secretary of State and on behalf of the promoter. What I've said is that I will certainly take instructions on that as an initiative and I will report back to the Committee. But in the meantime you clearly have the ear of your constituents and you have heard some concerns about this part of the arrangements for construction of the railway through the area of Ruislip in tunnel. If there are individual residents / householders who you believe you would like us to get in touch with about this then please let us know and we will get in touch with them. We are very grateful – this is not a substitute for our own engagement – if you have from your own local knowledge people who you believe it would be beneficial for us to get in touch with who are within the 30 metres area; we will seek to do so.

131. CHAIR: I think the point is HS2 realises there's work to be done and I'd be very surprised if when we produce a report at the end of the Bill if there weren't at least a paragraph or two on the issue of deeds of settlement and surveys and things like that with some comment. So it certainly is an issue which has been raised by a number of people.

132. MR MOULD QC (DfT): There was one other point, if I may, which is a general matter. It relates to this question of giving assurances. Given that we are at a particular stage in the development of this project, and the Committee knows very well what I

mean by that, if we were to seek to give the kind of absolute – that was the word you used repeatedly, ‘absolute’ – commitment to particular ways of dealing with phasing the work in West End Road for example now, the risk you run, amongst other things, is that the law of unintended consequences comes back to bite you. Because we discover when we have a much clearer and more detailed understanding of those works that what we have committed to now in a state of partial knowledge of the detail, if you like, is actually a sub-optimal way of dealing with those works, and yet we are fixed with it because we have given a commitment to Parliament and we cannot depart from it. So it’s actually in the interests of your constituents if we give commitments as to a process that we would expect to go through, particularly the process of local environmental management plans, and then we look to firm up in a more precise way as to how we would do those works as part and parcel of the detailed planning of the project. That’s a point of general principle which I suggest is worth just bearing in mind in tempering the kind of repeated demand for absolute certainty, which I fear is just not achievable or sensible at this stage in the process.

133. MR MEARNS: Mr Mould, with regard to residents who live within this 30 metre zone, and I understand the point about you taking instructions from the promoter and from the Secretary of State, but from my perspective do you not think it’s reasonable from your perspective to go back to the promoter and the Secretary of State and say that ‘you really should endeavour to make those contacts because there’s a likelihood that there’s a real possibility that the Committee could come back with a recommendation to do so’?

134. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, I clearly understand the need to provide a clear explanation of what is inescapably a technical and quite complex subject is important. And so can I leave it like that? I will certainly seek to report back on that. And you do know that there’s one opportunity which we might bring forward which is in the context of the pre-registration arrangements which I mentioned to you which are intended to come forward later in the year. That will give people the opportunity to say ‘I would like to be registered for a settlement deed’. And it seems to me to make sense that they should have a simple guide to what the settlement deed does to enable them to decide whether they want to pre-register in that way or not. So there’s an obvious advantage of timing those two matters together.

135. MR MEARNS: And I think that one of the things that concerns me about that is that we've come across, for instance, in evidence people who are saying 'look, I came to the matter that the line of route affected me quite late in the day having been oblivious o it before' and therefore from that perspective I think it's incumbent on the promoter where we know where the route is going to make every endeavour to contact all those residents and let them know that they really should respond to this.

136. CHAIR: Within three metres.

137. MR MOULD QC (DfT): They do know quite a lot. There's quite a lot of information already.

138. MR MEARNS: Oh, absolutely.

139. MR MOULD QC (DfT): But I take your point.

140. MR MEARNS: I accept that but I think, you know, people have for whatever reason busy lives and they can be inundated with all sorts of post, etc. and for whatever reason people might just miss the fact that this is something which is going to impact on them down the line, if you pardon the pun.

141. MR MILLS: Sorry, Mr Mould's answer raises a supplementary in my head. And I do understand the point he's raised. The assurances, and in particular the assurances on the West End Road utilities works, if we're being asked to agree the assurances that are being sent out at the moment and then, as you say, the more detailed... because this is one of the problems: that until you've done the detailed work you won't know yourselves as to how bad it's going to be – trust me, it will be bad – when you've done that our residents and we as the council wouldn't want to be 'crikey, we've already signed the assurance letter'. We would like to say 'well, in light of this new emerging evidence the assurances obviously need to be amended'. And I would just hope to say that there's a process that would allow such amendment.

142. MR MOULD QC (DfT): There is such a process but the premise is false. A letter of the kind that you've just referred to, which I think is a letter sent to the Chamber of Commerce –

143. MR MILLS: The schools.

144. MR MOULD QC (DfT): The schools. That is not a letter that the schools have to sign up to. It is an assurance which is given to them. They can take it or leave it but they're not in any bound to it even if they accept it. They're not thereby condemned only ever to that level of comfort. They can come to us at any time and say 'we've been thinking about the assurances you've given and we wonder if you would deal with this point as well' and we'll have to consider it.

145. CHAIR: Clearly if HS2 descend on Hillingdon and do everything it wants, everybody is going to be stuck in their homes for years. And so it is logical to schedule things over a period of time both for the project and indeed for local residents. And the point about assurances to Parliament is that your Member of Parliament will be able to get up in the House of Commons and say 'HS2 gave this assurance to my residents in West End Road or Lane or whatever and this isn't being carried out'. And that would be quite a serious matter and I'm sure that is the matter which the Department for Transport will take very seriously. And so ultimately there will be a row in Parliament over what people have said to your residents.

146. MS O'BRIEN: May I also add one other point please? Just got a point of clarification please. It's in the exhibits that you sent through on behalf of the promoter. Can you go back to P7230 please? Which is the tunnel sections petition for 736. Can we get the opportunity to have it up on the screen? Yesterday evening, if you remember, Luke and Ellie spoke to the Committee from Lawn Close, and actually Mr Mearns picked it up about the points of deviation and the depth of the tunnels. In the centre, in 2A on there, we've got a cross-cut section of Herlwyn Avenue – not Road, but that's fine – and it's got on there again an embankment and it's saying that the deep bore tunnel is 16 metres, point 6 in Herlwyn Avenue down which is I think between 20 and 25 metres. If this is the same as Lawn Close you're on another road that you've got another problem with. And I think you probably have to look back at all of the people that you have given assurances to, to say that 'you're now 25 or 20 metres down; you're 15 foot higher up than you were'. And, again, it could be affecting extensions of properties and obviously outbuildings or whatever people have, ponds, etc. Because Mrs Leonard is in Herlwyn Avenue and I don't know what this cross-section is about.

147. MR MOULD QC (DfT): If I may say so, Councillor, I think the premise of your point is a false one. We have not given a large number of assurance which specify the

depth of the tunnel in an inaccurate way. As far as I know, there are relatively few assurance letters that we have sent to petitioners who have parts of their property above or in the close vicinity to the tunnels because relatively few people who are in that situation have petitioned Parliament. And so the example of the gentleman and his wife who came yesterday, as far as I know, is the only instance of that. I'm not saying that there are definitely any instances of it because I may not know about other examples, but as far as I know that is the only instance of it and we have been able to provide accurate information to people. And if anybody is concerned as to know the predicted depth of the tunnel from the surface at its nearest point from their property then they should get in touch with HS2 and HS2 will be able to provide them with that information.

148. CHAIR: Or if you have concerns raise it outside. We're going to have to crack on because I'm starting to worry that nobody is running Hillingdon if all the Councillors are in Committee Room 5. Alright. Thank you very much, Councillor Mills, Councillor Markham, Councillor O'Brien.

149. MS O'BRIEN: Thank you.

150. CHAIR: We now go to the next petitioners which are Philip Corthorne, Councillor John Riley and Brian Crowe. This is West Ruislip. It's in the second book. CHAIR: Good afternoon, gentlemen. As time is marching on, I'd appreciate if we could move through things at a relatively speedy way. I feel I could write a book on Ruislip at the moment.

151. MR CORTHORNE: Ah. Indeed. Thank you. We will do our best with that. We've a few slides. There are one or two with which you'll have some familiarity. We will touch on them briefly, if only to emphasise our point. If I can just introduce ourselves. I'm Philip Corthorne. Cabinet member for Adult Social Care, Health And Housing. I've been with the Councillor for Hillingdon for 22 years. Councilman Brian Crowe, to my right. Councillor for Hillingdon for 13 years and a past Mayor of Hillingdon, and to his right, Councillor John Riley, a member for seven years, Chairman of the External Services Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Parent and Board and Standards Committee. Between us, for information, we've a range of professional experience outside local government, in law, commerce and education, and between us

we've just under 100 years of residence in Ruislip, between the three of us. So, you're catching up with us, by the sound of it. If I can come to slide four, please?

152. Now this is a map of West Ruislip Ward, which the three of us are privileged to represent. It contains part of the High Speed 2 construction route. And of course the golf course compound. More on that to follow shortly. And as will a more detailed map. If we can move on to slide five, please? The next four slides give a feel for some of the cherished, distinctive and historical features of Ruislip and again I'll try and be brief because I imagine you got a sense this from the Ruislip Residents Association yesterday. But this is a very pleasant residential area and to quote John Betjeman, from his poem, *The Metropolitan Railway*. 'And all that day in murky London Wall, The thought of Ruislip kept him warm inside'. And, at least, that was before High Speed 2 was conceived as an idea. That might have given him something of a chill, one suspects. You'll be familiar with some of these, as I say, but let me just briefly comment that what you're looking at here is Manor House, Ruislip, a listed building, built around 1500. It's on the site of the Abbey of Bec's priory and it's part of what we now refer to as Manor Farm Complex. And if we can move on rapidly to slide six? What you have before you is the magnificent and almost unique, grade two listed Great Barn. Now, this dates back to the 13th century and is one of only two buildings of its type in the UK. Slide seven, please? This shows the internal appearance of the Great Barn. I couldn't begin to do justice to it, and nor have we time. Let me just say that it is an architectural gem that we are privileged to have in our midst.

153. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: We've got something like that down, the great hall here.

154. MR CORTHORNE: Ah, well, well, quite. Well, I did say one or two.

155. MR CROWE: Chairman, the roof's not as good as that. Nowhere near as good.

156. MR CORTHORNE: And I think that the point, if I can just develop that, Manor Farm is alongside Berry Street, which has, on occasion, been referenced by High Speed 2 as a potential route for construction traffic. Now, whether or not that's exceptional, well, there's room for discussion. We've had different information. More on that shortly. If we can move on then to slide three, please? I beg your pardon. My apologies. Can we go back to four? I do beg your pardon. At the census in 2011, there

were 10,611 residents in the Ward and 4,577 households. Now our population continues to rise with the development of new housing of all descriptions. Some of it now within very close proximity to the proposed West Ruislip tunnel construction compound, particularly the Ickenham Parkside, which are still under construction, as we speak. We are in regular contact with our residents, ranging from surgeries, events, to individual meetings, for both political purposes and also to deal with their grievances and concerns and, of course, as you can imagine, High Speed 2 is very prominent among them, over the wholesale destruction and blight to our way of life and very existence in Ruislip and the surrounding areas over the seven to 10 year build period.

157. The three of us have made public our opposition to the project very early on in a number of ways, including motions to Council. In the local elections last year we were returned with opposition to High Speed 2 a very key part of our campaign, as was the case for colleagues elsewhere. However, we do appreciate, we do fully recognise, that the principle of the project now has parliamentary backing and as such our efforts must now be to make sure that we're focused on persuading the committee as to the best mitigation for our Borough and for our Ward. And we do seek to be constructive in doing so, for all our opposition. If we can have slide three back again, please?

158. First and foremost, we are in strong agreement with what has already been said far more eloquently than I am, for the case for the tunnel extension through Hillingdon out into the Colne Valley, as set out by, not only the Council, but also from Peter Brett Associates and Regeneris. We fully endorse all that's been said about that. We recognise that for many of us this will be the defining issue of our time as elected members of the local authority. The sheer magnitude of this whole undertaking casts a deep shadow over everything else which we might otherwise see as business as usual in the normal run of events. And I do hope that you're getting some sense of that from what we and others are saying. Can we have slide nine, please?

159. Now, with or without the tunnel, there are a number of serious problems for which we seek mitigation and compensation as listed in slide nine. My colleagues will be expanding on these points in a moment. We will be looking for detailed responses from High Speed 2 on these and I hear the past discussion about the difficulty with assurances. But, I'm afraid, they cannot be glossed over with bland assurances and 'it'll be alright on the night' mentality. I'm afraid our collective experience with regard

to accurate and consistent detail on important issues from High Speed 2 has been deeply unsatisfactory, so far. The local community have not asked for this monumental blight to be visited upon them, allegedly in the national interest. We remain very much to be convinced about that. They certainly don't benefit from it. They didn't vote for it. And yet this is being imposed against their wishes and over the heads of their elected representatives. I will now hand over to my colleague Councillor Brian Crowe, who will begin to explain the highways matters of concern. Thank you.

160. MR CROWE: I'll endeavour to do some of that. Can I have slide 10, please? Thank you. We are an automotive borough, in an automotive ward. In West Ruislip 81.6% of households own one or more vehicles. And of 16 to 74 year olds, 42.2% go to work by car, taxi or van. 20.6% go to work by public transport. You will have seen this morning how difficult it is to move around the Ruislip area and much of that congestion is in or on the borders of West Ruislip. You've heard a great deal of material about the impact of this bill on highways. And we should wish to stress, as much as we can, the pressure of vehicle traffic on what are basically three routes out of West Ruislip and onto the A40. We are the last exit, I think, on to the A40 North before Beaconsfield. For many hundreds of vehicles, these roads are the only access to the A40 to go into London. Lorry movements from the construction work are going to add to all of these problems. And the three of the major problems are referred to in the second point: Traffic delays, High Road Ickenham, Swakeleys Road and Breakspear Road South, some of which you are very well all familiar with already. Don't forget, bus journeys and other forms of road transport will also be impacted. It's not just the anti-social drivers who are going to get clobbered by this. There are very limited routes through which we can move. Three small roads, really. And highly congested junctions. Any significant additional traffic is going to mean gridlock. And there will be a natural increase, apart from HS2.

161. The petition response document, Traffic Management Plans, and reference to Welham in it, the Welham process, suggests there are alternative routes for traffic in the area. The phrase 'changing journeys to avoid heavily congested roads'. Where are the routes for these changing journeys? I don't think you were shown any this morning. I don't know any. If any of us knew them, we would be using them already. And they will probably be congested. I'd like to observe that HS2 is relying on the Welham

model for their assessment of traffic impacts. The committee will already be aware at the London borough of Hillingdon has reservations about this and we understand that so did TfL, for this particular set of circumstances. A quote from the petition response document from HS2: 'The methodology for assessing the traffic and transport effects of the proposed scheme in the London borough of Hillingdon during construction and operation faces was developed in consultation with TfL'. TfL's response to our officers in writing is, I understand, I quote: 'They are broadly happy with the strategic validation of the model, although Welham is not really the tool to assess a specific junction performance'. You will have seen this morning that junction performance is central to the problems of traffic that we face now and will face in added measure in the course of this build. We also have, as was pointed out by the residents of Ickenham, Ickenham Residents Association, problems of saturation. So, put that all together, you're in real trouble.

162. There's an acknowledgement by HS2 that this issue has been a problem. This confirms on behalf of our residents the fears as to traffic chaos. HS2 are only now undertaking, I think to our officers, to consider the performance of junctions, which is really too late. One of our mitigation requests is therefore for specific certainty with regard to the details of the alternative routes referred to in the PRD and which apparently form part of the traffic management plans. We want traffic management plans. We want certainty in those traffic management plans. We want what was described this morning as robust traffic management plans.

163. Second point, the second area of difficulty, slide 21 I think, please. It has often been difficult for us to be sure of what is involved in the transport arrangements that HS2 are proposing. Our residents and our fears have increased because of the difficulty of being provided with consistent and accurate information about the build in our area. Principally, with regard to traffic increase as a result of what has been become described as 'lorry movements'. I think Mr Mearns had a point when he referred to attrition. And attrition can sometimes come in the form of successive bombardments of varying accuracy and strength. We've had a disturbing range of movement assessments, routes, volume forecasts, with each failed number inflating people's fears. It's been very difficult for us to get consistent and accurate information. You've heard from Ruislip Chamber of Commerce that there are grave concerns about the effect on

our High Street. Now, I know it's a seven to ten year build period in which HS2 say they will only use that route in exceptional circumstances. That is a point to which we might return. What are exceptional circumstances? And how are they to be dealt with? There has been no clear certainty about the extent to which Berry Street and the High Street will be used. We've had different responses over time in relation to that. I repeat, we need certainty.

164. I will suggest, a further point, therefore, that on the basis that there is a traffic management plan, we might perhaps, during the course of the build, at least at the peak of it, if not through all of it, at the start of each week or maybe each fortnight, have HS2 provide the local authority with the projected lorry movement details for that week, including any exceptional elements and which roads are to be used. That would make it possible for residents and businesses to be able to predict rather more accurately how they might deal with things.

165. I have one other particular concern before I, you will be pleased to hear, come to my conclusion. Can I have slide 11, please? The golf course compound. This is the West Ruislip Tunnel Portal, which is being served from Ickenham High Road, with an effect on the High Road and its nearby residents. Can I have slide 13, please? Now, that is a map of the route the construction traffic will have to take in order to get to the compound, which is in that sort of area there, as you can see. Yes. We're concerned about the viability of the proposed volume at the entrances and exits at the end of West Ruislip's road bridge, which is down here. This part of Ickenham Road has a constant and heavy volume of traffic, with many lorry turning movements by heavy vehicles, likely to be potentially disastrous. Particularly because, we talk about so many movements per hour or so many per minute or whatever and if my calculations are accurate, then at the peak this is going to be one every six minutes. But, the problem is this road blocks up anyway. And one of the worst congestion points in the borough is up the top here, just up the top there, on what's called the White Bear Roundabout. Now, traffic is going to come down here, presumably turn in there, around, out again. These two turnings are not easy. That's a relatively small residential turning. That is no more than a small dropped kerb, with a couple of broken down gates screening foliage at the corner of the car park and golf course.

166. When we recently spoke to the representatives of HS2, their solution to this was

signalling the junctions. And that's all they had. They said they might have to be signalised. Well, there's a set of traffic lights further down there. There's a set of pedestrian traffic lights at West Ruislip station, which is heavily used, people constantly coming across, and now they want to put another one in there and another one in there. Bainbridges Auctioneers is down here. There's an old people's home down here. There's another old people's facility over the other side of the bridge. And the entrance to the West Ruislip Car Park is also there, on this side of the road. Moving heavy vehicles, heavy goods vehicles, in and out of that particular area is going to be very difficult, very congested, and frankly, very dangerous. I'll explain that in a moment. But, first may I point out, that the residents here will have to contend for seven years, with a peak of 18 months, with a HGVs going around, in a 360 degree circle. Up to 300 movements a day, which, as I say, is one per six minutes. I'd like to know what mitigation can be provided for them. I understand there's no appropriate compensation available for those affected by construction works and that will be regarded, I think, as construction works. One additional point there on this matter. These houses back onto Ickenham road. The access is in there, there and round. So, there will be, if that is the route, getting in there, they'll be going in and turning right into their properties with oncoming HGVs at regular intervals, presuming that they go that way. And if they don't, then they've got an even worse crossing. I said this is really quite dangerous. Can I have slide, let's see, which one do I want? I beg your pardon. Slide 14. Now, that's looking up Ickenham Road, towards this turnings off to the left. If you look at the top, you'll see that vehicles will turn to the left just before that white lamppost there. I think I'm right. That's the drop kerb on the way in. Now that is an HGV route for a major construction project. And it may give you an indication of why we are less than enthusiastic, apart from the golf club and rifle club and so on, for the use of this facility for the main construction compound.

167. The bottom shows it further back. That shows the traffic lights at the top of the West Ruislip bridge. That is the brow of the bridge and that means that the vehicles come up Ickenham Road, and if it's not a congested, and they can get any sort of speed, they will come to a bridge, a humpback bridge; I know how HGVs are high, but I don't know they'll be up to see over the top of that very quickly, with a set of traffic lights, then the lights on the bridge, and then over the top to two lights and this 360 degree business. I think really that this is unsatisfactory and, as a solution, as he said, we

might have to signal, they said, we might have to signalise the junctions. It seems to me to be a council of despair.

168. I'll conclude by making just three more points. The first clearly we want this to be reconsidered. That's not what I really want. But, it's the first thing I'll say. We want this reconsidered. We want compensation, a proper system for the people who are being most affected by it. And that's, I think, quite serious. Secondly, much of this could be avoided. And I know what the answer is going to be. I'm absolutely certain. Because I've heard it before. You've heard it before. The possibility of using the TfL Railway Depot at Ruislip, Ruislip Gardens, as a brown field site, with potential for less damaging access, and therefore, avoiding this problem. I want to avoid Harvil Road, I know that. But, it will greatly mitigate this particular difficulty. We are told that this is impossible. I suspect that a few years ago we would have been told the whole HS2 project was impossible. Engineers like challenges. And they can frequently solve them, if they are asked to do so with sufficient determination. Another possibility, I suppose, would be the use of a temporary or permanent haul road coming out the other way, rather than using Ickenham Road. Now, I suspect in saying that, I'm probably building up one or two resentments behind me. But, then, if you are a Councillor, that's what happens, as I'm sure a member of parliament will well know.

169. MR MEARNNS: And how you can work on having to compromise all of the time.

170. MR CROWE: Actually, I heard, Mr Mearns, a week or so ago I say when the whole thing was being discussed that he'd be really quite happy if this sort of investment and structural change could be provided instead for the north east of England. And, may I say, I sympathise very much. And I'm inclined to support your view.

171. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Most of it actually connects the north east of England with the rest of the country.

172. MR CROWE: Instead of cutting off West Ruislip from the rest of the country. Ultimately, ultimately, there is a solution to much of the problems. Nothing's perfect. It's a big project. Nothing can be perfect. But, there is a solution. Please give us a tunnel.

173. MR RILEY: Well, that's my queue. Chairman, as a local politician and a barrister, brevity doesn't come easily, but I'll do my best.

174. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: You're not being paid.

175. MR RILEY: Well, that's right. As far as you know. Yesterday, Mr Chairman, you said at the beginning of the session that you'd like to know with speed and clarity what people wanted. Well, you've heard to a large extent what we want, please, as Councillor Crowe has just said, is a tunnel. Because of all the reasons that you've heard, not just from us but from everyone else today, and I suspect, over the past many days that you've been sitting listening to these petitions.

176. Very briefly, I want to touch on loss of amenity and way of life because you've heard already, and I do have a number of slides but, quite frankly, they just repeat what you've already heard and seen. We've touched already on the loss of HOAC, we really do need to re-emphasise the extraordinary value that we put to that place. And you've heard from HOAC themselves. You may well have seen it. It is something that we just do not want to lose. And a tunnel would by and large mean that we would not lose it and not lose it forever, as it were. Similarly, with regard to the impact on the golf course which is something which many, many of our residents use, young and old. And we know that's going to be in significant trouble. We heard from Mr Mould the other day about how it might be reinstated. But, nevertheless that is certainly something in relation to amenities that we would also ask for. One of our asks would be the proper reinstatement of any loss of amenities as a consequence of the build as time goes on and towards the end.

177. We understand that there is, within this overall scheme, a provision for legacy mitigation and to that end we would also ask you to consider, in your final proposals to HS2, making a number of new roads and infrastructure for the betterment of the area after the whole project has finished. Now, we've heard a great deal about mitigation and in my other world, mitigation usually follows a finding of guilt before sentence is passed. Well, as you've heard today, many people feel that they're in for pretty much of a life sentence. But, in the terms in which it's being used in these proceedings, the provision of a tunnel is the principal mitigation.

178. Similarly, the whole business that has been gone into with regard to information

and accuracy of information, we heard the other day, again from Mr Mould, about the fact that the High Street and Berry Street, a very fine street, if I may say so, as somebody who actually lives on it, would not be used unless it was in exceptional circumstances. Well, the problem with that is what is exceptional? Now, the example was given of a very large containment, a very large lorry, for example. Well, we've had that before. Articulated lorries mistakenly coming down the High Street, trying to turn left into Berry Street, on a very, very tight mini roundabout. Just would clog the whole place up. There's any issue, and I don't know if HS2 have thought about this, but, Berry Street has, width restrictions and speed mitigation aspects to it already, so, it's could cause a problem in any event. Ladygate Lane, now, let me touch on very briefly, we've heard that that is not going to be used. Well, if that's right, and a letter comes out to that effect, we'll all be extremely pleased with that.

179. So, principally, a tunnel. Secondly, significant mitigation in terms of restitution of loss of amenity. And principally, better ways of being able to move around.

180. A very personal example. From Berry Street, to get out on to the A40, I've realistically, if I want to get out relatively quickly, and even now, after 20 years of residence, the time it takes to get out of Ruislip and on to the A40 and to use all the various motorways that connect with that, it's gone up by an hour in 20 years. So, when we first came to Ruislip, we'd be leaving at 7.30 a.m. or thereabouts, now, it's 6.00 a.m., 6.30 a.m. to get out with any reasonable speed. Otherwise, I think what people are going to be faced with in that north end of Ruislip is trying to go to Rickmansworth or Stanwell to get out onto the motorway that side. So, that's the sort of problem that we're facing because of the nature of gridlock. I said I'd be quick. I have been. The other want is that we want to thank you very much indeed.

181. CHAIR: You deserve a fee for your contribution. Are you going to wind up?

182. MR CORTHORNE: I've nothing to add. I endorse my colleagues' comments. Thank you very much.

183. CHAIR: Okay. Mr Mould?

184. MR MEARNES: Who, of course, is working pro bono for HS2.

185. MR MOULD QC (DfT): My duty is always be honest with the committee. And the answer is, no, I'm not, actually.

186. The one thing that perhaps ought to be, we just ought to remind ourselves of, is that for those roads with which these Councillors and other petitioners have expressed concerns, Hillingdon is the local highway authority. And it is Hillingdon, as local highway authority, who under Schedule 16 of this bill, will be asked to grant approval for routes for heavy goods vehicles. It is Hillingdon with whom we will be required under our own arrangements, to seek to agree traffic management plans. And it is Hillingdon who will be responsible for considering the safety of access proposals for construction sites, such as the one that you see on the screen in front of you. So, the degree of influence that Hillingdon and its Councillors will be able to bring to bear upon the detailed arrangements for construction traffic in this area is reflected in those arrangements. There are others. But, I need not, those are sufficient to illustrate the point.

187. CHAIR: Can I ask a question, Mr Mould? When we were in Warwickshire, which seems like ages ago, the County Council had some agreement with HS2 about traffic management or traffic organisation in some of the roads. Presumably there'd be similar arrangements with Hillingdon?

188. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes. We'd be delighted to begin discussions with Hillingdon with a view to taking forward those arrangements. I mean hitherto Hillingdon, I understand the reasons why, had been focusing their efforts on trying to, well, initially, they were focusing their efforts on trying to invoke the courts to stop HS2 in its tracks. Then, more latterly, they were focusing their efforts, as they are today, on getting the railway into tunnel under Colne Valley. But, on the basis that that may or may not succeed, before the committee, we can perhaps turn our attention to talking about a world in which we have to look to manage traffic through the area, and we, for our part, are very ready to have those discussions.

189. CHAIR: Councillor Crowe made the point about regular updated information about lorries on particular parts of the road network.

190. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes.

191. CHAIR: I think I remember part of the *Bridge Too Far* film they talked about the road being quite narrow, working it like, putting certain vehicles on and off. Clearly, in Hillingdon, there needs to be somebody, a manager, sitting in the control centre, coordinating what's going on across the road network. So, with CCTV, so that the difficulties that one has, can be overcome.

192. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, we did discuss this briefly, as you say, with Warwickshire. And we said there were some problems, there were some potential difficulties with that specific model. But, you pointed out, and have done on a number of occasions, that these vehicles will be fitted with GPS. And so, I think where we left it with Warwickshire, we would be looking to work with them to see whether we could develop arrangements to have real time –

193. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Split cycle offset optimisation.

194. MR MOULD QC (DfT): You know the technical terms much better than I do.

195. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: There is an alternative Australian system, but, ours is –

196. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Right. Okay. They'll listen to that behind me, I'm sure. But, no, seriously, we, developing the traffic management plans and the local plans, will need to think about how we can maintain management and adherence to arrangements once they are in place and once they're in operation. The other point I would make, if I may, is this. I should have said. We have undertaken an initial safety audit of the arrangements for accessing the Ruislip tunnel construction site, which you have. And it is on the basis of that safety audit that we have identified this as an access point. But, as I say, that's not a done deal. There's a lot to do in order to ensure that that operates safely. And, it may involve, for example, some signalisation in order to enable that junction to accommodate the peak numbers of lorries that actually are not three or 400 a day. But are, on our current predictions, 90, two-way during the peak. So, 180, if you like. 180 movements during a day, during the peak period of operation.

197. Now, the other point was this. We've mentioned that we are looking again at the possibility of a haul road route to serve the Harvil Road depot. And that haul road would, as you heard from the presentation last week, that haul road would go, we're

considering something that Mr Seaborne mentioned, which passes along the western side of the Uxbridge golf course. Now, that passes, I think, on land that is owned by the London borough of Hillingdon. And it would be good to know that, as we take forward consideration of that, that we can look to engage with Hillingdon on the possible use of that land for that purpose, because of course if it does pass muster, it may well provide a solution to taking quite a substantial amount of the traffic that would otherwise, as you know, at present would need to be routed through Ickenham, taking a substantial amount of the traffic off the roads, of the public highway, and on to a dedicated road. None of that, all of that's subject to further consideration, but, it will be good to know that we have at least a listening landowner, if that turns out to be something that has some legs to it.

198. MR CORTHORNE: Can I just respond briefly to Mr Mould comments? He has made the point about Hillingdon's role in finding alternatives. I mean I would remind the committee that our own transport officers have testified before you that they cannot see alternatives. Now, if there are to be discussions, then, fine, let's see where they take us. Let's see where we end up. But, I do think that we have to have these alternatives established, rather than some vague, theoretical possibility, which you've referred to in the PRD. We must have that discussion.

199. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Have Hillingdon Council formally authorised their offices to have full private discussions with HS2 to see what can be put forward formally?

200. MR CORTHORNE: I can get you a response on that if –

201. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: I get a sense that the answer is yes, but.

202. MR CORTHORNE: I'm not sure. I'm very happy to respond, to arrange for a response.

203. CHAIR: Essentially, most of the County Councils or Highway Authorities up and down the line have cut a deal of how they will manage the traffic and a lot of them have got severe traffic problems. You're not the only ones who are going to have severe traffic problems. In the round, East Birmingham is exactly the same thing. And, ultimately, it just means your professional officers sitting with the professional people of

HS2, trying to work out what the least worst option is. But, we do appreciate that there are limited choices when it comes to West London.

204. MR RILEY: The other thing to pick up on of course is that in relation to the local authority's ability with regards to roads, there is the ultimate sanction of the Secretary of State causing the local authority to do something in relation to the roads if there's an adverse decision. So, it's not quite as cut and dried in terms of the responsibility aspect.

205. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: And I also remember the point made by Humphrey Tizard that there's no point in having a good system at one place, if you can't pull the traffic out at the other end.

206. MR RILEY: Well, that's the other point. Is that given the nature of the area, the ongoing impact and the ripple effect of sorting out one area and choking up another is very significant in this area. Because we are an area that stretches around as far as Watford because people use that, as Councillor Crowe said, we're the last exit before you get to Beaconsfield. Otherwise, you are trying to loop up, past Watford, to Abbotshire and places like that. And that just moves the problem further on. So, it's really very difficult.

207. CHAIR: Thank you.

208. MR RILEY: That's all from us, I think. Thank you.

209. CHAIR: Right. Thank you very much. I think we're going to have to move on. Thank you very much gentleman for your contribution. We now move on to the Harefield Councillor, Henry Higgins.

210. CHAIR: Are there two, rather than three Councillors?

211. MR HIGGINS: Although that film is my son's favourite, and Edward Fox says we're going to run it like a railway, to Michael Caine. And they said, if you haven't got a ticket, you're not going to get on it.

212. CHAIR: No. Absolutely. Alright.

213. MR HIGGINS: Obviously, my name is Councillor Henry Higgins. I'm elected Councillor for Harefield. Elected back in 2002. I have had many responsibilities

during my Council period. I was a chairman of a planning committee, so I know how this feels. I've also been a cabinet member for culture, sport and leisure. And now I and the chairman of the Executive Scrutiny Committee. I'm going to call my witness, which is a fellow Councillor, her name is Councillor Jane Palmer.

214. CHAIR: I normally meet Councillor Palmer at a pub.

215. MS PALMER: Thank you, Chairman.

216. MR HIGGINS: Who is also the chairman of Children and Young People for Development and Domestic Violence. She's been a magistrate for four years and also a Councillor. And she lives in Harefield. So, I'm going to let her expand on some of the subjects before you. So, if I can pass over to you, Jane.

217. MS PALMER: Mr Chairman, members of the select committee, at the risk of criticising my colleague, I've been a magistrate for over 22 years.

218. MR HIGGINS: Sorry.

219. MS PALMER: If we could, just to say that I also live in Harefield, so, I speak not only as a Ward Councillor, but also as a resident myself. And the place at which I met you, I live in a road just off there. If we could have slide number four, please? Just to say that, so, we fully support for HS2 to be built in a tunnel through Ickenham and the Colne Valley. And we support and endorse the evidence given by the Council officers. Slide number five, please? That huge expanse of red, I remember when I got elected, that was the first thing I saw. That turned my stomach. That is how it is going to effect the residents that we represent today. That huge amount of construction area. We will all be subjected to some form of change. We sit here this afternoon representing the residents of Harefield. You've heard from them. You've heard how eloquent they have been. They have been commended both by yourselves and indeed HS2 have made reference to how well they've done. So, it is for me, just now to put the case for those who aren't fortunate enough to be here. The residents that are not as active as the ones that have come up and championed how they do desperately not want this village to change.

220. I cannot fail to mention again and I make no apology for it, the impact to our

village on the highways. I have to say that I'm not sure what the answer is. All I know that at 6.00 a.m., I am woken up by lorries. It took me 20 minutes plus to get out of my village this morning. And that was at 7.00 a.m. Something that hasn't been mentioned much and I feel that I need to mention of today is the impact that this traffic will have on Harefield Hospital. My father had a heart attack three years ago, and living in Eastcote, which is literally about a 15 minute drive from Harefield Hospital. He lived because he was able to get to the hospital quickly. We only need to have common sense to realise what will happen with the amount of traffic that this construction site will bring over a huge period of time. I ask the select committee to think that what will happen, what I believe will happen, is people will die in ambulances. People will be dying in our Ward in the back of ambulances, something that I do not want for this Ward. I do not want for this country. And I do not want for Harefield Hospital. It's as simple as that. I'm sure there is somebody in this room whose life may well have been saved because they got to a hospital on time.

221. Not to mention the impact on people having heart and lung transplants. They do not need to be living in areas full of dust and dirt and other things that high levels of traffic bring.

222. In Harefield we also have businesses which have also got overlooked. I'm sure you've heard from the small traders. You've heard about people who run businesses on the canals. Harefield is in a village with no public transport. We rely on these roads that come in and out. We are in the process at the moment of re-establishing small businesses within our village as part of a Council system that we are trying to bring back businesses into Harefield. I am sure that they will suffer because nobody can actually get to them. People will be gridlocked and that is our fear. So, I worry about how this will affect small businesses.

223. Just touching slightly off of that, it's saying that as a resident myself, I have not been consulted about HS2. I have not had any letters. I know there was something that happened very early on, very late leafleting to residents, and there was a meeting at Harefield Hospital, right in the middle of August holiday time, which is, in my opinion, not the best way to contact residents. But, I have heard assurances that that will change. So, I will move on from that.

224. In our area we also have a Harefield civic amenity site, which deals with the huge amounts of recycling and rubbish collection that the borough does. We are very proud of the way we run our recycling centre. That is on Harvil Road. You've heard, at length, sorry, at New Years Green Lane. You've heard at length today from the residents of Ickenham, who've more or less have done our job for us. They've told you very comprehensively about Harvil Road. I'd just like to reiterate and echo that. The top part of Harvil Road is in our Ward. So, I support what's been said. Going back to the Harefield civic amenity site. Harefield suffers, I'm sure most boroughs do, people, they dump rubbish in our streets. If you are not a member of the London borough of Hillingdon you have to pay to use the amenity sites. What happens is rubbish gets tipped there forever. I make about five or six reports of rubbish a week, if not more. Beds, settees. What I seek to say is that with more gridlocked traffic, people just won't be bothered to go to the dump. More rubbish will be dumped, I'm absolutely sure that that will happen. And that in itself of course will hold up traffic. We have things. They don't dump it nicely. They'll dump it over a road. They will block accesses. So, I would seek to say that too. And also the amount of vehicles that we have going into that site at the moment is 250,000 a year. So, obviously, we've got these lorries on top of it.

225. Probably, finally, on my traffic issue would be that we are already, if you heard me say when I was here before, about the difficulties that we have with lorry traffic in Harefield already. Lorries begin moving, we have gravel companies, recycling companies, lorries begin moving from 6.00 a.m. in the morning right through to the evening, Monday to Saturday, sometimes Sunday. Parking on pavements, ruining the roads, and all sorts of things. It is very difficult for us as Ward Councillors to identify the lorries causing the issues, so, I welcome the fact that, I think I'm hearing that, there will be some form of identification. And I ask that this is clear. That we have a clear guidelines as to what we should do if we believe that is a HS2 vehicle that is causing difficulties. Because my experience as a Ward Councillor, it is incredibly difficult to work out what lorries are, which lorries are which, and where I should go to get these lorries, the conduct of these lorries, to behave in a more suitable manner for my residents. I'm sure the select committee are understanding the points I'm making there. Is there something you wanted to add?

226. MR HIGGINS: Yes. Just a couple of things. On the impact of highways, there'll

be only two roads able to get out of Harefield. For a lot of people, there is one local bus that goes through and they use that to get to the tube stations or to the local bank, either in Northwood or in Uxbridge. So, there is a definite need for access. And those accesses that are left will be jam packed with traffic. On the civic amenity centre, as well, there is also our salt depot. That is for our gritter vehicles to load up and grit the roads in the wintertime so there won't be any ice. And we have further additional usage for vehicles through that centre. And I'm also led to believe that Harefield Hospital is actually the cardiac centre for West London. If anybody has a heart attack in that range, they will go there.

227. MS PALMER: Thank you. If I could have slide number 8, please? I just also want to talk briefly about those residents that we don't see. Those residents that are stuck in their homes due to illness. Those residents that rely on carers coming to them. They're not able to come here today, so, I will say to you that what will happen to those people, we all know, I'm sure, members of the select committee will understand, the national problem of carers rushing in and out in 10 minutes, 15 minutes. I am sure that our residents will be waiting for care that may not arrive. They will be getting up much later than they're used to. We already have experiences of carers not coming. Not all carers drive. Some carers have to come on public transport. I am absolutely sure that the residents of Harefield who rely on care, from care agencies, will be waiting and may not be fed, medication may not be given on time because people are held up behind lorries. It's as simple as that. So, I ask that to be taken into account, those residents that cannot actually speak for themselves, that is what I'm saying there, on the highways.

228. CHAIR: In the event of a division, I'll say order, order and adjourn for 15 minutes. If there's a second vote, it'll be half an hour. There may be a division in a minute. Please, pray continue.

229. MS PALMER: I'll touch very briefly on the impact of the Colne Regional Valley Park. You've heard a lot about that. It's part of our environment. It's part of Harefield. It's part of what makes Harefield fabulous. Obviously, the tunnel will save an awful lot of, you know, it will maintain the historic environment and conserve and enhance biodiversity. So, I won't carry on with that. I'm sure you understand what I'm saying there. Also, with the ecology, the habitat will be lost, woodland, ancient woodland,

open grassland, so, obviously, the tunnel will preserve a lot of that as well.

230. I must mention HOAC. You've heard so much about it. It is in our Ward. It is just so valuable to the community. There can be no other option for HOAC other than a tunnel. We cannot have a year. It will fold. How can HS2 find another lake near to Harefield that they will relocate. It's just ludicrous. It cannot happen. We must, in order to save this incredible, valuable thing that we have in this borough, we must have a tunnel, to save HOAC. My colleague is a trustee of HOAC and he may well want to just add something.

231. MR HIGGINS: Just a couple of things to add because the trustee, Jeff Creek, did a very good presentation about HOAC. There is no way that the site could be used during construction or after construction. They need a 45 acre site with a lake. In the very beginning we did have assurances from HS2 that they would find us an alternative site. We're still sitting here; and some sort of feeble answer came across this morning, which was very disturbing. I'd like to just a bit about my background. I went to an inner London school, comprehensive, Sir William Collins, of course. They had no green fields. But, what we did do, is we travelled out of London to sites like HOAC, so, we could have opportunities to sail, to climb and to do everything else. And in inner London there is a lot of depravity there, and obviously, money is short and these kids, like my friends, and we had a great time doing it. And to lose that site. It is not just for Hillingdon. It's the whole of West London. Their bookings are in advance from schools across all of that, West London. So, I'd like to just say that.

232. MS PALMER: Just briefly touching on the public rights of way. We ask that, you know, it's mooted that these will be diverted on too busy roads, with no footpaths, representing a potential danger to life and limb. Should we not be fortunate enough to get the tunnel, we would ask that it's re-evaluated, that the diversion of the public bridleway is re-evaluated, so as to eradicate any risk to public safety. I don't propose to go on anymore –

233. CHAIR: Order, order. I adjourn for 15 minutes.

Sitting suspended

On resuming—

234. CHAIR: Sorry for the interruption. Councillor Palmer.

235. MS PALMER: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I'm literally on the last five seconds. If I could just ask for slide 15, please. There seems to be no rhyme or reason why Harefield has to have two electricity units. We've got no explanation as to why we need one, let alone two. I would like to know, at some stage, why these are necessary.

236. And then, finally, if you can just put the last slide up for me, please, number 19. I'll hand over to Councillor Higgins.

237. MR HIGGINS: Yes. It's self-explanatory there. I know that we're pressed for time, so you can read that. I'm sure you read a lot of documents. It's not going to be difficult. After being here today, it does seem that HS2 needs some ideas. I've given one idea and it may be helpful to the Committee. In Hendon, we built a pool for £54 million, which is chickenfeed to this project. However, we took a T5 example, which is Terminal 5. Terminal 5 eliminated all costs. So, basically, there was no contingency fund, so they made sure, down to the last bolt, what that could do. We used the same principle on the pool, which was estimated to be built for £5 million. We got it for £3.5 million. So, there is plenty. If you can work on the sums for that, £300 million would be easy in this project to find –

238. CHAIR: So, Hillingdon could build HS2 cheaper.

239. MR HIGGINS: Yes, I bet we could do it better, yes. Thank you.

240. MS PALMER: Thank you for your time. I'd just like to say that we do believe that Harefield has been unfairly treated. For Harefield, there can only be one option. For HOAC, there can only be one option. That is a tunnel.

241. MR HIGGINS: Thank you for your time.

242. MS PALMER: Thank you for your time.

243. CHAIR: Thank you very much, both of you. Mr Mould will respond to a few points –

244. MS PALMER: Certainly.

245. CHAIR: In particular to your point about the electricity substations.

246. MS PALMER: Thank you.

247. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes. They're both required. They serve different purposes. One is to get the power to us from the grid, and the other is, effectively, to convert that power to our own uses, and so you have to have the two. Mr Smart can put it in more technical language, and I can bring him in, if you like, but that's –

248. CHAIR: Could he write a letter to the two councillors and explain in more... I think probably that would give them... Then, when they're asked by constituents, then they have something they can send their constituents as what they've been told.

249. MS PALMER: Thank you very much.

250. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Even better, we could have a quick word outside, if that would help.

251. CHAIR: Yes, but maybe write a letter as well.

252. MR MOULD QC (DfT): We'll do both.

253. CHAIR: Any other points about Harefield? We did Harefield quite a lot in March.

254. MR MOULD QC (DfT): As you know, we don't plan to put traffic through Harefield. I take the point that the approach roads include Harvil Road, and so there's a concern about that. We're back to the same point that we've had all the way through, which is we have an already congested road network in this area. We have to take traffic onto that road network to build the railway under our current plans. We've been looking to find a way of ameliorating that. The TfL network doesn't work. We've given an assurance about looking to improve the performance of the junctions, following a review, if that looks like it would be a sensible option. And we are now looking again at the possibility of a haul road. But there is an existing problem and we are constructing a railway and having to grapple with that problem, so there's no issue about that.

255. MS PALMER: If I could just come back on that, it's about time that residents of Harefield had a real answer as to what is happening. I hear what you're saying. I

suppose I just don't trust it. We need to know. We've lived with this long enough. We need to know what the options are.

256. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, I've just summarised them.

257. CHAIR: Thank you very much, both of you.

258. MS PALMER: Thank you.

259. CHAIR: And thank you for sitting here all day.

260. MS PALMER: It's been a pleasure.

261. CHAIR: I'm thinking of striking a medal for people that sit here all day.

262. MS PALMER: How kind.

263. CHAIR: We now move on to Councillor Ray Puddifoot, leader of the council. Are you on your own? No mates or...? Welcome, Councillor.

264. MR PUDDIFOOT: Thank you.

265. CHAIR: Which ward do you represent, by the way, in Hillingdon?

266. MR PUDDIFOOT: I represent the ward of Ickenham. I have done since 1998. I've been leader of Hillingdon Council for the last 15 years. I'm sure the Select Committee will agree that the Ickenham Residents' Association and all the other Ickenham petitioners made excellent and clear presentations to you, and that their exhibits are probably amongst the best that you have seen.

267. My fellow Ickenham councillors and I fully support and endorse the issues that they have raised and the requests that they have made to you. I do appreciate that the Select Committee have heard in March, and over the last couple of weeks, about the impacts of HS2 on our environment, our residents and businesses in Ickenham, West Ruislip, Ruislip Manor, South Ruislip and Harefield Village. Rather than run through these issues again, as leader of the council I would like to emphasise the key issues across these wards and across the borough. I will not, therefore, repeat the details of the devastating impacts on the borough of the current HS2 proposal that have been made so well by our residents, but will take this opportunity to summarise the case for the Colne

Valley tunnel, and ask that the Select Committee give serious consideration to this option, which, as you are aware, is also fully supported by TfL and by Boris Johnson, as stated in his letter of 9 June.

268. Could I have slide 2, please? We were pleased to hear, Sir Peter, you say two weeks ago, on 16 June, in response to our case for the tunnel to offset the severe, prolonged construction and operational effects of HS2, that Hillingdon's extraordinary and unusual circumstances have been accepted. Now, we're not taking that as acceptance of our argument for a tunnel, but it's still very welcome.

269. Could I have slide 3, please? Why is a tunnel justified? Firstly, the huge number of people that will benefit from the tunnel option. There are 71,000 people living within the wards immediately affected by High Speed 2 proposals. This figure excludes those who come from further afield to visit the Colne Valley and Hillingdon to use HOAC, as we've heard, the golf courses, fishing lakes, public footpaths and bridleways, and other local facilities. We therefore believe that the possible additional cost for the tunnel – if, indeed, it were the most expensive option – can be justified and would represent value for money.

270. Could I have the next slide please? These are the impacts of HS2 shown on one slide. The impacts and the sheer extent of these, taken with the cumulative effect, are devastating and are outlined on this slide. It doesn't have to be that way. The tunnel proposal would eliminate the majority of harmful impacts of HS2 in the borough, and also remove the adverse operational impacts on the borough.

271. Could I have the next slide? What would the tunnel do? All the green things on this slide is what the tunnel would do: 1) Remove the necessity for the Ickenham railhead. This then means that the excavation of the Copthall cutting would not be required to create the Ickenham railhead, which, in turn, would obviate the need for spoil-dumping on 75 hectares of open land in Hillingdon.

272. 2) Remove the need for the dumping sites and the associated local haul roads that are going to be proposed for open fields which are designated as green belt. I am aware that HS2 Ltd is proposing to relocate one of its dumping sites to reduce the traffic impacts on local residents, but this proposal would not be required at all under a tunnel solution.

273. It would obviate the need for the loss of 145 hectares of agricultural land through spoil-dumping, and thereby maintain the contribution that these sites make to the landscape and ecology of the area. This would, therefore, remove the need for restoration proposals associated with those sites.

274. It would remove the necessity for the Harvil Road construction site. It would remove the need for the two-kilometre-long conveyor system which runs parallel to the Chiltern Line and close to the homes of the Greenway, west of the tunnel portal at West Ruislip. It has been stated that this twin-conveyor system will operate on a 24/7 basis and, therefore, it will inevitably impact locally in terms of noise.

275. It will not require the construction of a four-kilometre-long Colne Valley viaduct. It will remove the need for the West Ruislip tunnel portal. It will remove the need for substantial utility diversions. It will remove the bulk of the heavy-goods-vehicle traffic and remove the noise impacts.

276. Could I have slide 7? You will see from this slide and the next slide – and you have seen these before, Chairman, as part of previous evidence – it shows the magnitude of the harm caused by the HS2 proposals and how the tunnel proposals remove those impacts. The tunnel would not result in any loss of agricultural land and not result in any significant concerns about poor air quality. HOAC can remain in use and be totally unaffected, both during the construction of HS2 and thereafter.

277. In contrast, the viaduct scheme would result in the HOAC lake being reduced from 45 hectares to 35 hectares. Jeff Creek has confirmed that HOAC cannot remain open during the construction works, because there would be health and safety concerns and also noise impacts on campers and staff accommodation, and on the lecture room and outdoor teaching. It is unlikely that users would wish to use the facility during the construction period, and the business would be adversely affected. Furthermore, the piers of the viaduct, plus the noise, would render it unusable once HS2 is operational.

278. Despite the commitment of HS2 Ltd to the Select Committee that it will continue to actively pursue the relocation of HOAC to Denham Quarry, we firmly agree with Jeff Creek that this option will not be feasible, for a variety of reasons, and there is every prospect that HOAC will be forced to close. Peter Miller has already stated that the Denham Quarry solution will be a compromise, and Jeff Creek has expressed concerns

about the size and shape of the new lakes, which will more than likely not be able to accommodate HOAC and the Hillingdon Rowing Club. The commitment, therefore, is just to carry on looking for a solution and it amounts to nothing more. After all this time, there is still no viable solution for HOAC.

279. There will be no adverse impact on Ruislip Golf Course. In contrast, the viaduct scheme will result in a temporary closure of the golf course of up to two years, and the council is being asked to contribute towards the mitigation measures to reconfigure the golf course on a smaller site.

280. There will be no adverse impact on Harefield Lake 2 and the Harrow Angling Society. HS2 Ltd maintain that the lake can continue to be used for angling with the viaduct scheme, but the noise impacts of this will inevitably deter anglers and, as an angler, I can confirm that we will not be fishing there.

281. No public rights of way will be affected. We heard a very good presentation on that this morning. This, therefore, removes the need for any associated mitigation measures. I'm aware that HS2 Ltd have offered an assurance regarding the public right of way, but this does not go far enough, given that some of the diversions are still not feasible, due to the restricted road width and road-safety concerns. And we did hear about the excessive cost of the bridge. That would not be necessary. There will be no adverse impact on the ecology and habitats in the area. In contrast, the viaduct scheme affects about 10 designated nature nights. Now, please remember that. I'll come back to that. Ten designated nature sites.

282. Can I have slide 8, please? These are the continued benefits if Colne Valley retains its current landscape value: views, tranquillity, ecology and recreational uses. There would therefore not be any requirement for significant mitigation, as is the case with the viaduct scheme, which even with mitigation leaves the landscape in its infancy for about 15 years, just to the time it takes for trees to mature. There will be substantially less noise impact in the borough during construction and no noise impact when HS2 is operational. This compares with the viaduct scheme where noise levels in the Colne Valley are akin to Heathrow Airport. Also, the viaduct scheme results in operational noise levels from HS2 making the Ruislip golf course less attractive and affecting properties at the greenway. It will substantially reduce the traffic impact on local roads, including disruption to local journeys, disruption to town centres and local

shopping parades and loss of new business investment within the area. Given that this is such a major concern I will come back to this issue on the next slide. There will be lesser impacts on the public water supply. It will remove the effect of closure to the local businesses as well HOAC, the Harefield Marina, the Arthur daily trips and some local shops in Harefield. Remove the need to acquire any properties in the borough. And therefore there will be no need for any associated compensation letters and rafts of letters that we've heard about this morning. It will end the blight that has overshadowed the borough since 2010 and greatly relieve local residents and businesses from the considerable stress the Hybrid Bill proposals are have on their lives.

283. Can I have the next slide, please? Turning to the issue of traffic, will the assurance given by HS2 Ltd mitigate the traffic issues? No, it will not. I'm aware that HS2 Ltd provided an assurance to the council on 15 June that it would carry out further traffic assessments in Hillingdon and in particular the busiest junctions to see what measures could be introduced to mitigate the traffic impacts, whilst this is helpful it certainly does not address our concerns. We understand that the assurance offers some prospect of improvement, but we also know from our own experience of dealing with traffic on our local roads that there is no realistic solution as David Knowles, Doreen McIntyre and Brian Adams have already explained to you. If there were any such solution you can rest assured that we would already be putting these before you for consideration. I can assure you that no matter how many traffic assessments HS2 Ltd carry out they will not be able to come up with any significant ways of easing the traffic congestion. HS2 Ltd proposed construction routes will be able to cope because traffic will be displaced onto other local roads. But again we know from our own local knowledge that traffic displacement already occurs and all our rack runs are saturated at peak times as made clear, again, by David Knowles and Brian Adams.

284. In your comments in a moment I would ask Mr Mould about the comment he made earlier about it would full to Hillingdon Council to decide the routes. I don't believe that to be true at all. I believe that the Secretary State would choose the routes if we were unable to do so. But I would welcome his comments on that. But as I say with your help in getting us a tunnel we may not even have to visit the fact.

285. Can I have the next side, please? I'm aware that HS2 Ltd have acknowledged that the Environmental Statement included a worst case scenario and that they published

information early June to show that their new traffic assessments show a reduction in heavy goods vehicle construction traffic bringing the volumes down from about 1,860 per day to 1,000 during the peak period when Ickenham railhead is being constructed. I'm afraid that again have to agree with David Knowles and Brian Adams who've already explained to you that even if the figure of 1,000 heavy good vehicles is a reasonable estimate rather than optimistic one it is still far too high for our local roads.

286. This slide shows that the 12-hour daily traffic flows off Swakeleys roundabout, which even at 1,600 HS2 vehicles will include 1,460 heavy goods vehicles would mean one every 27 seconds. In my opinion there can be no doubt that HS2 Ltd's proposals are flawed and if they were to go ahead that would leave to untold misery for residents and businesses. The Select Committee have visited the area and will be able to come to their own conclusions of the effect of an additional vehicle every 27 seconds for 12 hours day. And whilst better than HS2's previous estimate it still remains totally unrealistic.

287. Can I have the next slide, please? The TfL depot. Can the TfL depot remove the need for the Harvil Road construction site and the Ickenham Railhead? HS2 Ltd maintain that both the Harvil Road construction site and the Ickenham Railhead would not be required whether the TfL depot site was used or not. Again, I think Mr Mould was excessively harsh in his comments to Brian Adams this morning. HS2 have a lamentable record of starting with their business case, whether it's the first, the second, the third or the fourth. They were all flawed. Their traffic mitigation measures don't appear to amount to much and today we get this ludicrous comment about Crossrail in the south of our borough, the second largest borough in London, helping this problem. That is ridiculous.

288. In our view their comeback on this is totally unfounded and the Committee will hear from TfL tomorrow, who have practical experience in these matters. It is not in our opinion for HS2 to put their expert forward and we have to agree his word is law. We need to know from people who have done it, from TfL. If they say it can happen we believe they're worth listening too. TfL, as I say, have practical experience in these matters. They believe the TfL depot can replace the Harvil Road construction site and do away with the need for the Ickenham Railhead. This solution would also provide a long-term legacy for TfL, would combine all other activities in one site, would improve

the operation of Chiltern Railways and London Underground. Furthermore, as I said earlier, this solution would not require the need to excavate the Copthall Cutting and therefore there would be no need for 1000 lorry movers to dump material on 75 hectares of open fields as proposed in the Hybrid Bill Scheme.

289. I am aware and welcome the fact that HS2 Ltd is concerned about the expansion of the TfL depot site because of the impact on greenbelt and ecology. Whilst there would be some impacts that would be mitigated against as far as possible this option of including the Colne Valley tunnel is far less harmful than the damage to the ecology and the greenbelt in the current Hybrid Bill. I would refer you back to the ten sites that are going to be taken out by the viaduct option, and get one of their reasons for not accepting the TfL depot is that it would have some ecology impact.

290. Will moving the Harvil Road construction site to the TfL depot site mitigate the traffic issues? Yes, it will. We do not agree with HS2 Ltd that this will merely shift the traffic to other Ickenham and Ruislip roads. The Harvil Road construction site requires the installation of the Ickenham Railhead involving the extensive excavation works to create the Copthall Cutting. The removal of all that material, which extends over 7.5 hectares up to a depth of 20 metres in some places together with this dumping of 75 hectares of land in Hillingdon will reduce in huge volumes local traffic movements, which explains peak volumes in the phasing plan.

291. Can I have slide 12, please? This and the following two slides show what HS2 still need to do on their proposed viaduct scheme. I'll not go through each item because I want to beat that division bell, but these slides show that there is a vast amount of work for HS2 Ltd still to do in making the viaduct scheme a reality. No doubt we'll be told that this is detail, but there is an awful lot of devil in that detail that is yet to be revealed. These involve an awful lot of detailed and complex technical work, such as designing the viaduct, wide-spread surveys, huge amounts of consultation with numerous landowners organisation, preparations of traffic management plans, sorting out compensation packages etc.

292. Can I have slide 13? Again, there just a list. Slide 14? What is clear is that solution have yet to be worked out and none of these items have been properly costed. Slide 15? Let's look at cost. HS2 Ltd has agreed that the tunnel is acceptable in

operational terms but they have been charged with reducing the cost of the project. HS2's SIFT report in June 2015 referred to a cost difference on £295 million between the viaduct and tunnel scheme, excluding the cost of the Heathrow Spur. It may well be the issue of the spur that is more an issue for this tunnel option than cost. The HS2 viaduct costs were understated as they did not include £17 million worth of land and property, £50 million for the maintenance over 60 years of the ecology mitigation areas, £10-£15 million pounds for mitigation for HOAC and the golf courses, and about £100 million for the wider social environment and economic cost to Hillingdon.

293. The work by Regeneris shows that the wider cost to Hillingdon associated with HS2 could amount to between £100 million and £470 million. It should be noted that these figures do not include unquantifiable impacts of HS2 such as loss of habitats, impact on landscape, character, the harm to visual amenity, the closure or unacceptable diversions of public rights of way and reduced business investment in the area. Those costs amount to around £232 million, which would reduce the estimated cost difference between the tunnel and the viaduct on HS2's calculations to about £63 million.

294. On the other hand the costings for the tunnel as far as HS2 they include £36.9 million for the disposal of materials to landfill – this assumes that the spoil is no use for any commercial land restoration or habitat creation – and £120 million for the construction of the intervention gap at West Hyde, which is the worst-case scenario. So there's £156 million to offset against the £63 million. So it is entirely feasible that the tunnel option could be the cheaper of the two.

295. It is the firm view of Hillingdon Council and its local residents that on balance there is a strong justification for a tunnel across the whole of Hillingdon. Hillingdon simply cannot reasonably absorb activity on this scale for such a prolonged period of time.

296. Can I have slide 16, please? Now, which is the better proposal? There is without a doubt a huge amount of uncertainty about the HS2 scheme. Is the HS2 viaduct scheme sufficiently worked up and costed to provide a fair comparison with the tunnel scheme? Can they honestly say that the extraordinary harm of the viaduct scheme on so many people for so many years represents a better project than the tunnel? We support the views expressed by all our petitioners. The HS2 proposals will simply not work.

297. Can I have the next slide, please? Now, this slide shows in red the areas affected permanently or during construction by the viaduct option. You can see in clearly. Our borough is in the middle of the screen there. They are the areas affected. Can I have slide 18? This is the tunnel option. That vast amount of red is now confined to one small patch of red at the bottom of the scheme. The difference is both obvious and stark. Slide 19, please? Chairman, I'm not an engineer or a lawyer. I am a simple chartered accountant, who is not –

298. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: You were doing quite well up until now.

299. MR PUDDIFOOT: We are all aware of the debt burden this country has as a whole and the difficult job the government at both a central and local level has in reducing spending in areas such as defence, police and public service to balance the books. Indeed, there is a powerful argument for spending what transport budget we do have on upgrading our current services as a priority over getting to Birmingham 12 minutes quicker. I'm aware that the HS2 Ltd told the Select Committee on 15 June that if they were directed by the Select Committee the tunnel option could be achieved. We would respectfully request that the HS2 Ltd be asked to pursue the tunnel option with a view to making it happen rather than with a view to dismissing it, which has been the case to date. We would ask HS2 Ltd be given a firm deadline in which to carry out this task and that it be done in partnership with TfL and Hillingdon Council. We would work with them on that to see if we could produce a viable solution.

300. As Philip Taylor, one of our local residents, said to the Select Committee, "Without the backing of local communities HS2 Ltd will not be an entity for growth but an entity for decay, stagnation and misery." I end my presentation there, sir.

301. CHAIR: Thank you. You have done very well to canter through that lot there. A lot of stuff we've already discussed. I guess tomorrow when the Members of Parliament come we will discuss it also. Some of the issues will come up again. We will have a vote soon so I'm afraid you're going to have to be brief, Mr Mould.

302. MR MOULD QC: We presented as part of the – Councillor Puddifoot has run through the case that his council presented a fortnight ago. He summarised the main points that were made there. We presented our response to that at that point and what we did as part of that was to put a series of slides, which you'll find in the Ickenham

pack at P6202 – they were in the Hillingdon pack – which compare the environmental benefits and disbenefits of the tunnel against the non-tunnel option. I rely on those slides. We also presented a comparity costing of the tunnel against non-tunnel options and we rely on that evidence. We remain of the view that the right course is as set out in the Bill scheme. Thank you.

303. CHAIR: Thank you very much for your contribution today and your residents and your ward have done you proud in terms of making representations.

304. MR PUDDIFOOT: May I take this opportunity to thank the members of the Select Committee for the diligent and understanding way that you've heard the petitions from the residents of Hillingdon. I cannot say the same the same about HS2. I find their treatment of our residents derisory. I find their treatment of our council derisory. They will not even consider the views of our residents. They seem to think they have some god-like power just to say, "This is the option. There'll be no debates." That will not be accepted in Hillingdon and we may well be seeing you again sometime in the future.

305. CHAIR: We've also enjoyed meeting you and all your councillors who all seem very engaged.

306. MR PUDDIFOOT: Thank you.

307. CHAIR: Order, order. If you could withdraw from the room and just allow us to clear our thoughts.