

Petition 599 Calvert Green Parish Council and Petition 620 Charndon Parish Council

Summary

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

Our Parishes, part of Community Forum 13, are located in a quiet, rural setting with most properties within a one-mile radius of the proposed route. In Calvert no property is more than 160m from the line. All properties in Calvert Green are between 130 metres and 1 kilometre of the line.

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

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

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

What is now the small hamlet of Calvert was formed circa 1900 to provide homes for the workers at the new brick works. All that remains now is Werner Terrace, comprising 19 properties, built around 1904 and Brackley Lane with its later terraced and semi-detached buildings. The new village of Calvert Green, comprising 400 properties, is built on the old brickworks site.

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

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

The line is to be reopened as the East/West rail spur from Aylesbury, running past Quainton down a narrow cutting with ancient woodland to the east, and the new Energy from Waste plant and landfill site to the west, to Calvert where it will join with the main East/West line coming from Bicester from the west to Bletchley in the East. It is proposed that HS2 shares this corridor.

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AP4 and previous amendments to the Hybrid Bill positioned FCC Ltd's waste transfer siding immediately opposite many residential properties, on what is now Calvert Station LWS. We pressed the House of Commons Select Committee for the relocation of FCC Ltd's waste transfer siding at Calvert to a more appropriate site, 2km from Calvert and adjacent to the Energy from Waste incinerator. The Select Committee agreed that Calvert was an inappropriate site and requested HS2 Ltd. and FCC Ltd. prepare a Transport and Works Act Order.

It is also proposed to put a satellite depot and a materials stockpile on the LWS employing around 190 staff for a duration of almost eight years.

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

The promoter has planned to construct a pumping station, accessed from Brackley Lane, to service balancing ponds on the far side of the track. This will involve felling a screen of mature trees that would otherwise mask the view of the railway for affected residents. We cannot see how this can be a preferred option, when there are several other, more appropriate options.

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