

The HS2 (Phase 2b) Bill in the House of Commons

What you need to know

The High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill (HS2 Phase 2b Bill) contains the main legislative proposals for the Crewe – Manchester section of HS2.

The HS2 Phase 2b Bill sets out the work for the Crewe to Manchester section of HS2, including where that work will take place and the land that will be required, and will provide statutory authority for it. Detail on the impact of the Bill is set out in an accompanying environmental statement. More information and links to documents relating to the Bill and the petitioning process can be found on our website at: <https://bills.parliament.uk>.

The HS2 Phase 2b Bill is a hybrid bill, meaning that it has some features of a public bill and some of a private bill. Public bills relate to the general law of the land which affects everybody. Private bills affect individuals, institutions or localities differently from the general law, and are therefore subject to their own scrutiny requirements, including providing a means by which those differently affected may be able to object to (“petition against”) aspects of the Bill.

This guide provides a brief explanation of the stages the Bill will go through in the House of Commons and what you can do if you want to object to aspects of the Bill.

Stages of the Bill in the House of Commons

The HS2 Phase 2b Bill will start in the House of Commons and proceed in due course to the House of Lords. The general principles of the Bill will first be considered by the House of Commons in a “second reading” debate. If the Bill passes second reading, it will be referred to a select committee (a committee of MPs) which will have power to consider petitions against aspects of the Bill. After the committee has completed its work, the Bill goes to a public bill committee (a committee of MPs) which considers the Bill clause by clause.

What to do if you think you will be adversely affected by the Bill

If you think you will be adversely affected by the Bill and wish to object to aspects of it, you should set out your objections in a petition and submit it to the Private Bill Office at the House of Commons. There will be an online portal on the Parliament website allowing you to submit your petition – details will be published on: <https://bills.parliament.uk>.

There are limits to the sorts of adverse effects which will give you a right to have your petition considered by the select committee and further information about this will be provided in guidance made available on the Parliament website nearer the time of petitioning. The promoters of the Bill (the Department for Transport) may therefore challenge your right to have your petition considered by the committee. In such cases, it will be a matter for the committee to decide if the petition should be considered.

If your petition is considered by the committee and the committee agrees with your objections, it has the power to change the Bill before it becomes law.

You may receive a letter about HS2 Phase 2b from HS2 Limited, from the solicitors (Winckworth Sherwood LLP and Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP) acting for the HS2 project, or from the Department for Transport. That letter will tell you how you will be affected by the Bill. You can also object to the Bill if you have not received a letter but you think that you could still be affected by the Bill.

What is a petition?

A petition is a summary of objections to particular aspects of the Bill. It is a request to the House of Commons by you (the petitioner) to have your objections considered by the select committee on the HS2 Phase 2b Bill. (Note that it is a different process to Parliament’s online petitioning system for the general public to press for changes to Government policy.)

Who may petition?

Petitioners may be individuals, groups of individuals, or organisations.

When should you petition?

The timetable for receiving petitions in the House of Commons will begin the day after the second reading debate, which is expected to take place in spring/summer 2022. You can follow progress on the Bill online at <https://bills.parliament.uk>.

Can you petition both Houses of Parliament?

Yes. Petitioners may petition either House or both. There will be an opportunity to petition the House of Lords if the Bill is passed by the House of Commons.

What should petitions contain?

Nearer the time of petitioning, a template and guidance on what you have to do will be available on the Parliament website. The petition should state:

- who you (the petitioner) are;
- why the Bill affects you; and
- what you would like the committee to do about it.

If the Bill passes second reading, the principle of Phase 2b will have been approved, so general objections to HS2 Phase 2b should not be presented in petitions. But you can lobby your MP by sending a letter or email separately on this before the second reading debate.

Since your petition will form the basis of your case before the committee, it should include all the points of objection you have against the Bill. However, there is no need to elaborate objections in great detail.

What about consultations?

There will also be a consultation on the environmental statement accompanying the Bill, which sets out the environmental impact of HS2 Phase 2b in detail. You can participate in that consultation as well as petitioning against the Bill.

Can someone else represent you?

Yes. If you want someone else to represent you (for example, a solicitor or a friend) you can instruct someone to act on your behalf in all matters relating to the petition.

One option is to employ a professional Parliamentary Agent. Also known as “Roll A” agents, they represent those promoting Bills and may also represent petitioners wishing to object to a Bill before Parliament. The Roll A agents below may be able to represent you. However, you can, if you wish, choose anyone to represent you, provided you notify the committee secretariat in advance that you wish to be represented by a nominated individual.

Berwin Leighton Paisner LLP (Ms Helen Kemp) **Adelaide House, London, EC4R 9HA**

020 7760 1000
www.blplaw.com

BDB Pitmans LLP (Mr Ian McCulloch, Mr Nick Brown, Mr Nicholas Evans, Mr David Mundy) **One Bartholomew Close, London, EC1A 7BL**

020 7227 7000
www.bdbpitmans.com

Pinsent Masons LLP (Mr Robbie Owen) **30 Crown Pl, Earl Street, London, EC2A 4ES**

020 7418 7000
www.pinsentmasons.com

Sharpe Pritchard LLP (Mr Alastair Lewis, Mr Emyr Thomas) **10-16 Elm St., London, WC1X 0BJ**

020 7405 4600
www.sharpepritchard.co.uk

Veale Wasborough Vizard LLP (Mr Ron Perry) **Barnards Inn, 86 Fetter Lane, London, EC4A 1AD**

020 7405 1234
www.vvv.co.uk

What is the deadline for submitting your petition?

It is important that we receive all petitions by the deadline set by the House of Commons. This deadline will be announced once the Bill has passed second reading, which is expected to take place in spring/summer 2022. Please check our website or call or email the Private Bill Office to make sure you know when the deadline is. When the Bill reaches the House of Lords, a deadline for petitioning there will be announced.

Fees

You will have to pay a one-off fee of £20 when you submit your petition. (A further £20 fee will be charged if you also submit a petition to the House of Lords.) Arrangements for paying the fee will be publicised nearer the petitioning period.

How can you stay informed?

If you have any questions or if you would like to be kept informed about the Bill's parliamentary stages, and the petitioning process as information becomes available, do feel welcome to email the Private Bill Office in the House of Commons at prbohoc@parliament.uk (or for those who prefer to speak to someone by telephone on **020 7219 3250**).

More information about the HS2 project is available on the HS2 website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/high-speed-two-limited> or go to www.gov.uk and search for HS2.

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