

House of Commons

High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill – First Additional Provision

1. Petitioner information

In the box below, give the name and address of each individual, business or organisation submitting the petition.

Inland Waterways Association
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Registered Charity No 212342

Non-profit Distributing Company Limited by Guarantee No 612245

In the box below, give a description of the petitioners. For example, “We are the owners/tenants of the addresses above”; “My company has offices at the address above”; “Our organisation represents the interests of...”; “We are the parish council of...”.

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is the membership charity founded in 1946 that works to protect and restore the country's 7,000 miles of canals and river navigations for public benefit. IWA is a national organisation with a network of local branches and volunteers who work with navigation authorities, national and local government, and a wide range of voluntary, private and public sector organisations for the benefit of the waterways and their users.

Individual and corporate members of The Inland Waterways Association, and members of the public whose interests in waterways are promoted and protected by the Association, include boat owners, residential boaters, holiday boat hirers, boat building and hiring companies, marina and moorings operators and other waterway related businesses of all kinds, canal restoration groups, community boat charities, canoeists, anglers and users of canal towpaths for recreational walking, cycling, travel to work and for access to the natural and built heritage of the waterways.

2. Objections to the First Additional Provision to the Bill

In the box below, write your objections to the First Additional Provision to the Bill and why your property or other interests are **directly and specially affected**. Please number each paragraph.

Only objections outlined in this petition can be presented when giving evidence to the Committee. You will not be entitled to be heard by the Committee on new matters not included in your written petition.

1. Introduction

Additional Provision 1 (AP1) affects (inter alia) the Middlewich Branch of the Shropshire Union Canal at Clive Green Lane Bridge by introducing new works additional to the original HS2 (Crewe-Manchester) Bill.

This petition concerns Amendment AP1-002-004 which, whilst welcome in principle, has some adverse impacts on the Middlewich Branch canal and its users, and changes are requested to minimise these.

(Document and plan references are to the AP1 MA02 Report and Map Book)

2. Engagement

2.1

IWA has engaged with all phases of the HS2 project since 2010 on behalf of its individual and corporate members and the wider public interest in waterways. IWA's Right to be Heard (*locus standi*) was accepted for our petitions on Phase 1, and for an Additional Provision, and again on Phase 2a, and we gave evidence to HS2 Select Committees in 2016 (Commons and Lords) and in 2018 (Commons).

2.2

IWA commented on previous Phase 2 and Phase 2b consultations in 2014 and 2017 and responded in detail to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement consultation in 2018, and to the HS2 Phase 2b Western Leg Design Refinement consultation in 2020.

2.3

IWA also responded to the National Infrastructure Commission's Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the North in 2020, and to the House of Commons Transport Select Committee Inquiry into the Integrated Rail Plan in 2022.

2.4

IWA has petitioned against aspects of the current HS2 Crewe-Manchester Bill as deposited, and is both responding to the public consultation and petitioning on AP1 as their submission periods coincide.

3. Amendment AP1-002-004

3.1

This amendment appears to be in response to the Canal & River Trust's Environmental Statement consultation representation which asked for a ramped access to the canal at the existing Clive Green Lane Bridge "at right angles to the canal corridor along the

southern Clive Green Lane embankment” which seems most reasonable. However, the proposed amendment includes a ramp parallel with the canal on the north side (5.4.2 of the MA02 Report, CT-05-310 and CT-06-310 of the Map Book).

3.2

The ramp alongside the canal towpath is 130m in length and involves removing 104m of hedgerow; location not specified but presumed to be part of the towpath hedge. Additional planting is promised along the ramp to replace removed trees (5.4.3) but it would be better if the ramp were put behind the existing hedge allowing its retention up to the towpath connection. This will reduce the visual impact of the new ramp construction on the historic canal corridor and minimise disruption to the wildlife habitat of the hedgerow.

3.3

The amendment also involves removing the existing steps which are situated by the northwest corner of the bridge parapet (5.4.2):

“The existing steps to the canal will be replaced by a ramp approximately 130m in length, with a ramp gradient designed to be suitable for use by cyclists.”

Whilst this ramp provides improved disabled and cycle access, the removal of the steps makes access worse for pedestrians (5.4.14)*:

“Removal of the existing stepped access will give rise to a new moderate adverse effect on non-traffic related severance, which is significant. This is significant due to an increase in journey length of up to 609m for pedestrians travelling between the Shropshire Union Canal (Middlewich Branch) (south of Clive Green Lane) and Clive Green Lane (east of the Shropshire Union Canal (Middlewich Branch)).”

* (Note: the paragraph numbers 5.4.1 to 5.4.23 are duplicated in the report; this is the second occurrence on page 90.)

3.4

It is not clear where the 609m is measured, as the increased walking distance via the new ramp is presumably 130m x2 i.e. 260m, but either way this is an unnecessary inconvenience. The steps should be retained, or replaced with new steps in conjunction with the ramp, to provide more direct access for non-disabled walkers.

3. What do you want to be done in response?

In the box below, tell us what you think should be done in response to your objections to the First Additional Provision to the Bill. You do not have to complete this box if you do not want to.

You can include this information in your response to section 3 'Objections to the First Additional Provision to the Bill' if you prefer. Please number each paragraph.

Clive Green Lane shared use cycle and pedestrian path.

1. Redesign the cycle ramp parallel with the canal to run behind the existing towpath hedge which should be retained as far as possible, with additional planting on the west side of the new ramp.
2. Retain the existing steps or replace them in a similar position between the towpath and the ramped access to the historic canal bridge to provide a more direct pedestrian access for non-disabled walkers.