

Amersham Town Council

HS2 Petition

I am Nigel Shepherd

- Amersham Town Council (former Mayor)
- Chiltern District Councillor (Vice Chairman)
- Former Chairman Amersham HS2 Action Group
- Former Director AGAHST
- Transport background

Key Issues for Amersham

Construction related traffic will have a devastating impact on both our strategic and local road networks. This will result in considerable disbenefits to:

- The local economy
- Key services
- Social cohesion

We are also concerned about the tunneling impact on the River Misbourne, Shardeloes Lake and the potential for delays further increasing the misery of the construction process

Road Network: Context

- The geography of the Chilterns means that North South communications are squeezed into narrow corridors
- The roads in the HS2 Corridor by Amersham are mostly single carriageway with very limited scope for diversions
- We are starting from a low base - road transport provision is seen to be poor*:
 - Buckinghamshire is seen as the second worst performing (23rd out of 24) County Council in terms of traffic levels and congestion, and satisfaction with the condition of road surfaces
 - Bucks perceived to have a very high dependency on cars due to poor public transport provision (20th out of 24 County Councils) and limited community transport (21st out of 24)

* National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey 2014

Amersham Road Infrastructure - Issues

- Access roads to the construction sites around Amersham skirt Amersham the town (A413, A404, A355)
- Four key pinch-points (Shardeloes, Wheilden St, Gore Hill, Chequers /Stanley Hill roundabouts)
- 2/3rds of the bypass is less than dual carriageway
- Almost all of A404 and A355 (excluding bypass extension) are single carriageway

Key Issues:

- Roads are already overloaded, particularly at rush hours.
- Strategic roads come to a standstill when there are incidents on M40 and M25
- At key pinch-points emission levels are already being exceeded*

*CDC monitoring

The Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

The Buckinghamshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) identifies Key issues in the Chiltern area, including:

- Traffic generated by commuting
- Congestion in Chesham and Amersham
- Carbon emissions

Under current proposals HS2 construction traffic will:

- Increase traffic on already congested roads (particularly around Amersham and Chesham)
- Increase carbon and NO₂* emissions which already exceed the European 40mg/m³ limit**

* European commission air quality standards (figure quoted is averaged over a year)

**Chiltern District Council monitoring programme

Construction Impacts: Lack of Information

Amersham Town Council is particularly concerned about the current proposals for in our area for:

- Materials supply to construction sites
- Spoil removal
- Construction personnel movement

Roads are clearly the preferred transport mode but up to July 2015 there appears to have been very little assessment of current transport situation:

- No evidence of an evidence based logistics strategy (looking at all mode options)
- As of May 2015 only 20 manual classified and 56 automatic traffic counts in Bucks and no classified counts in the Amersham area

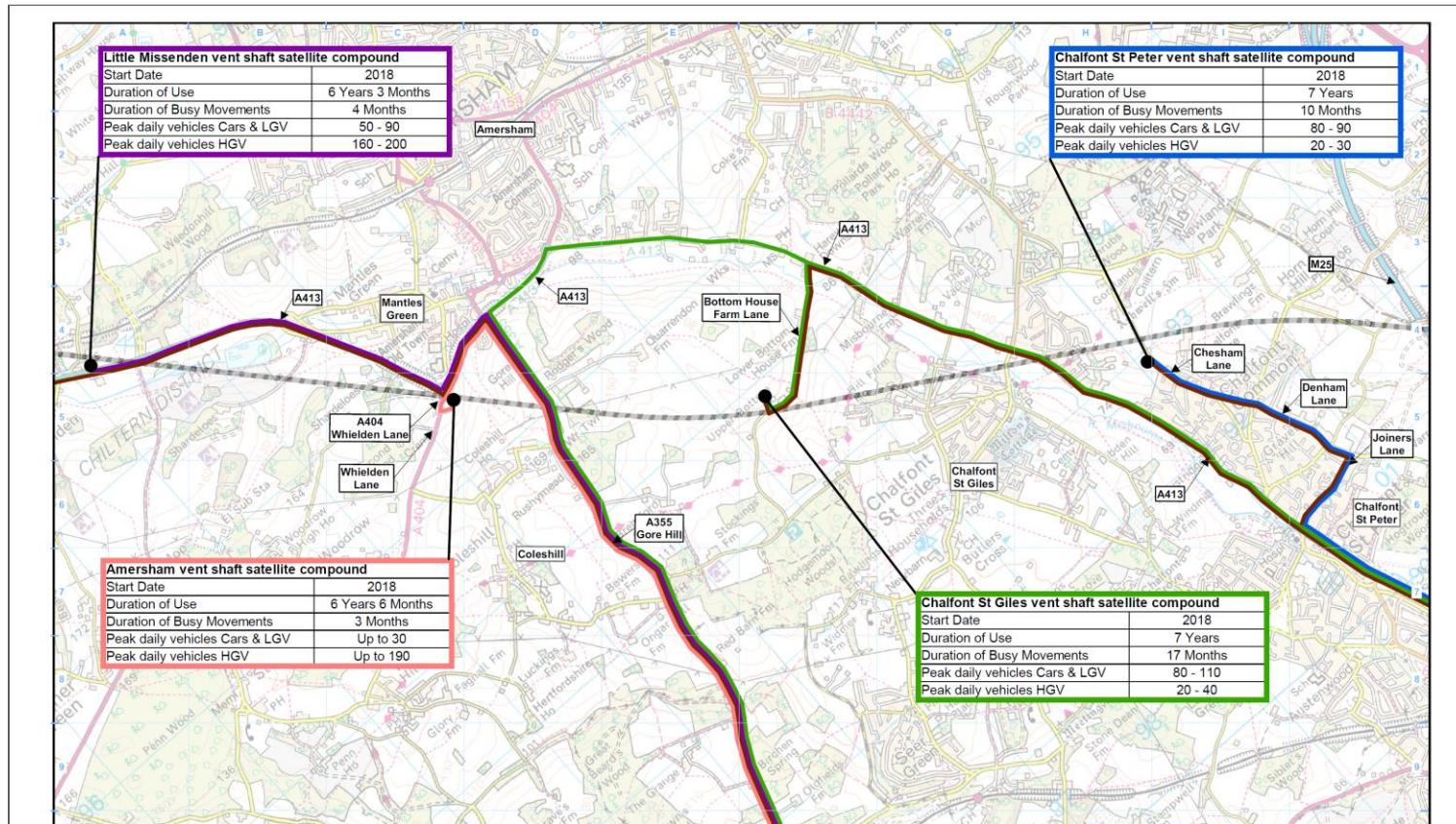
Clearly a low priority issue for HS2 Ltd

Stop Press (August 2015)

Latest data from HS2 Ltd (Summer 2015) indicates that previously reported levels of delays, congestion, and pollution from HS2 related HGV movements in the Amersham area have been understated:

- Road traffic congestion and delays as a result of HS2 construction traffic, previously described as 'moderate adverse impact', are now being referred to as **'major adverse impact'**
- Pedestrians (walking in an AONB) will likewise see an increase from 'moderate' adverse impact, to **'major adverse impact'**

August 2015 Info: Amersham HGVs



Amersham area generated HGV traffic:

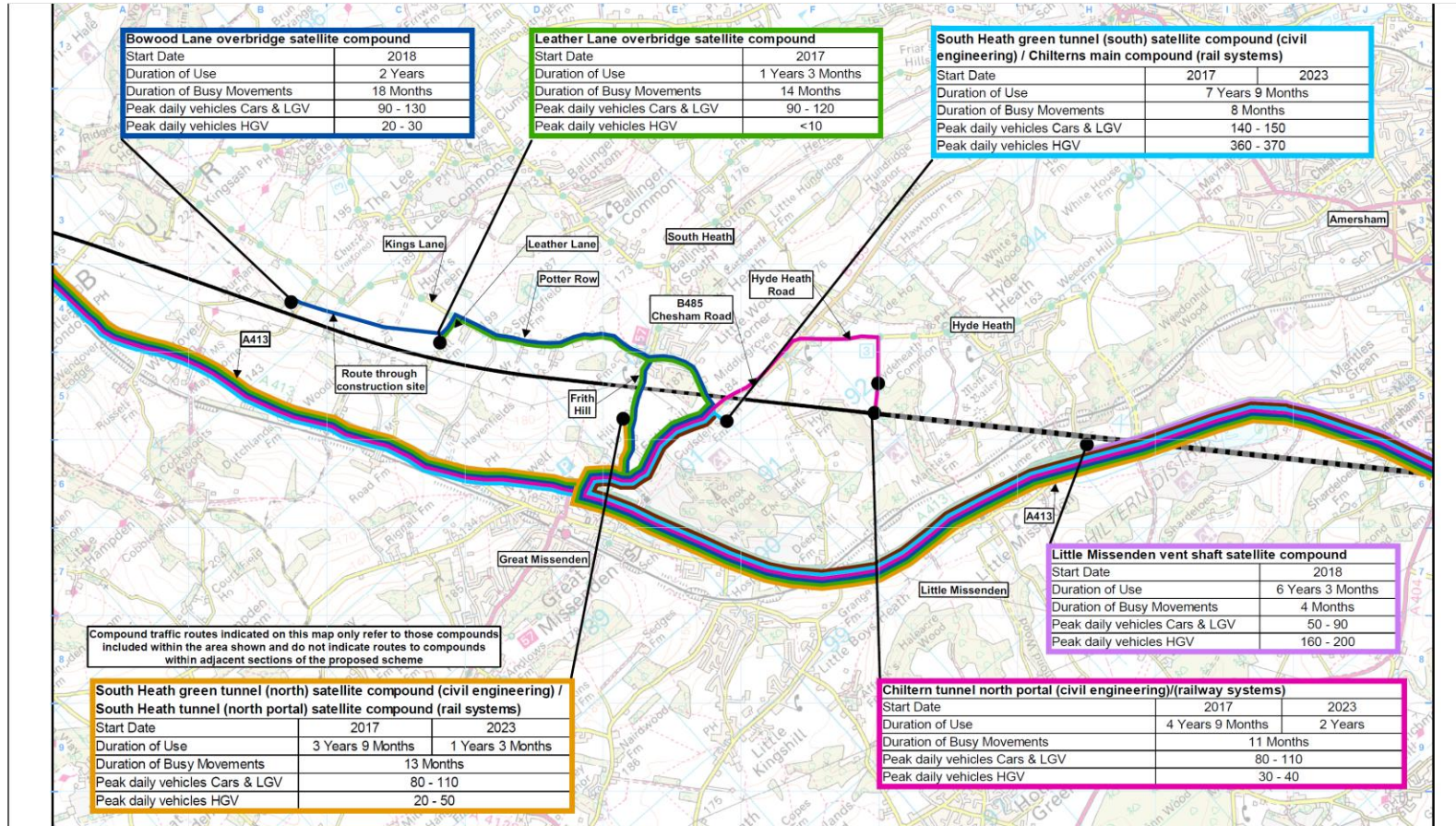
Duration of use: 6 -7 years

Peak period: up to 17 months

Peak period HGVs: 460 a day

But that is not all ...

August 2015 info: HGVs coming down A413

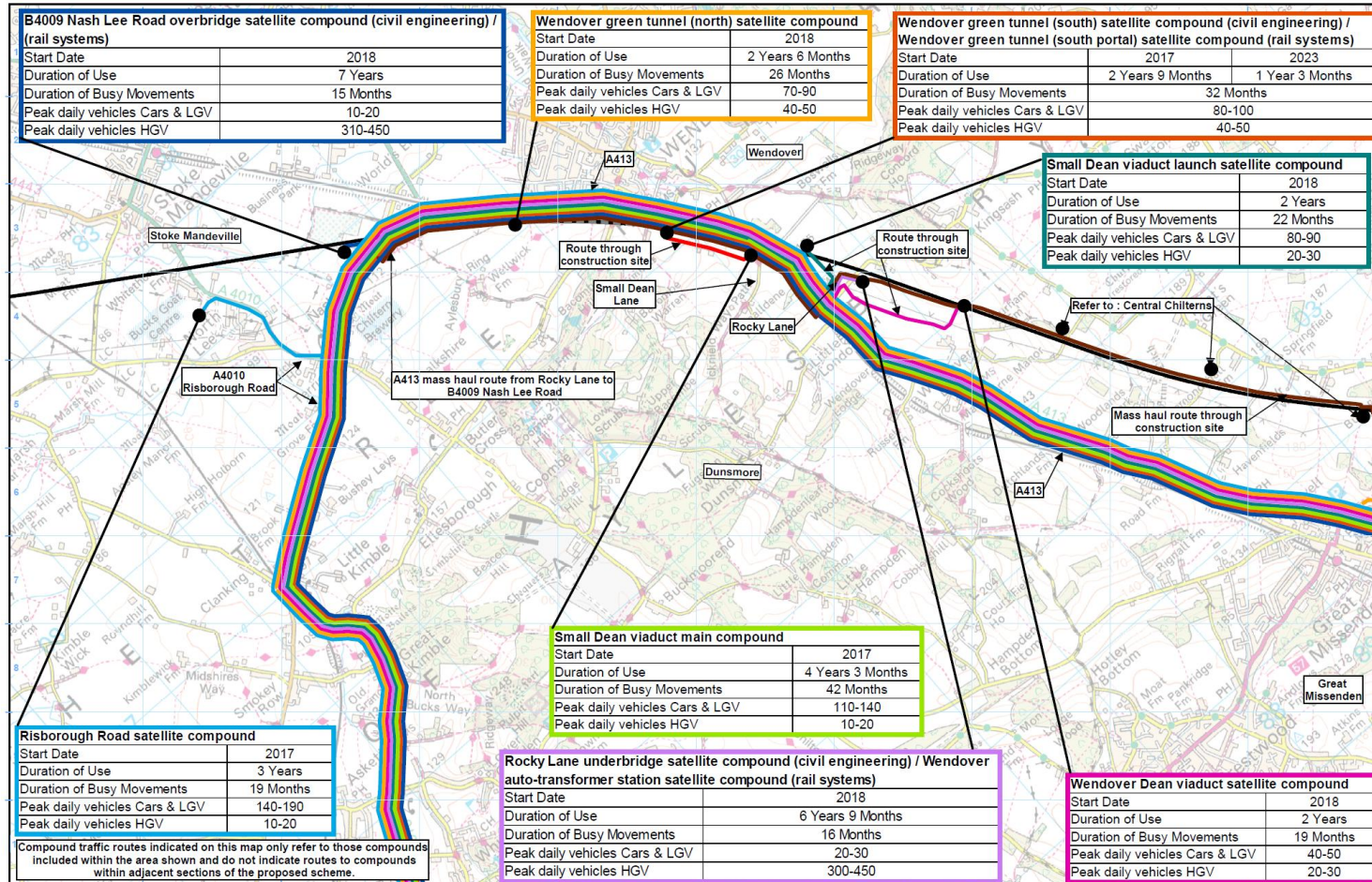


But HGV traffic will be coming from 'further up' the line ...

Duration of use: Up to 7 years
 Peak period: up to 18 months
 Peak period HGVs: 760 a day

Running total:
 Up to 1220 HGVs per day

August 20155 info: more HGVs coming down A413



But it looks like a proportion of HGV traffic will be coming from 'even further up' the line ...

Duration of use: Up to 7 years

Peak period: up to 32 months

Peak period HGVs: up to 1100 a day

Running total:

Up to 2320 HGVs per day

Construction Impacts: DfT Guidelines

Oxford Economics review of construction impacts* reviewed the 'whole projects' spreadsheet data (HS2 website, now archived). It was clear that rows dealing with construction impacts had a '0' entry. This indicates

HS2 Ltd has done no quantification of construction benefits / disbenefits

This is contrary to DfT guidelines (TAG Unit 3.5.2 para 1.4)

There also appears to be no quantification of economic welfare impacts on 'non rail users' (effectively – the community, us)

This is also contrary to DfT guidelines (TAG Unit 3.13.1. para 4.5.1)

* Oxford Economics: Construction impacts of HS2 in Buckinghamshire – Economic Appraisal Oct '13

Congestion costs:

- Travel delay costs in the Chilterns have been estimated at over £100 million*
 - £26.0m commuters
 - £15.6m work-related traffic
 - £63.8m in other not work time

* SQW research

Other financial costs

Other identifiable costs include*:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| • Increase in road maintenance (Chilterns) | £7.3m |
| • Reduced business productivity (Chilterns) | £2.7m |
| • Reduced visitor spending (Chilterns) | £31.5m |
| • Loss of land amenity loss (Chilterns) | £6.2m |
| • Increase in health impact (Chilterns) | £20.4m |

* SQW Research

Social Costs

The social costs are numerous, they include but are not limited to:

- Access to General Hospitals - congestion
- Access to Amersham Hospital – road take and congestion
- Impact to bus network – congestion and Wheilden Street land take
- Access to Amersham Crematorium – road take and congestion
- Access to local schools - congestion
- Access to local facilities in Amersham (a major local hub)
- Damage to local businesses (SQW Research)

Towards a solution: Step 1 – comply with DfT guidelines and European Environmental Laws

This petition has demonstrated that Amersham residents will be severely impacted by the proposed construction traffic. As a first step we petition that HS2 Ltd be instructed to gather information on this issue by complying with DfT guidelines in assessing:

- Construction impacts in the Amersham area (disbenefits and benefits) as detailed in TAG Unit 3.5.2 para 1.4
- Economic welfare impacts in the Amersham area as detailed in TAG Unit 3.13.1. para 4.5.1
- The UK is still a member of the European Union and has signed up to environmental standards on air pollution as a result of HGV movements. Current logistics proposals will breach these standards. We therefore request that this committee instructs HS2 Ltd to comply with the law

Towards a Solution: Step 2 – Develop a Construction Logistics Strategy

There are at least four methods/modes of transporting materials and people to and from the construction sites in the Amersham area / Chilterns:

- The existing / enhanced / additional short term road networks
 - The HS2 trace (from M25/ Aylesbury construction depots)
 - The Chiltern line
 - Pipeline (slurry spoil)
-
- We therefore request that the committee instruct HS2 Ltd to develop a (fit for purpose) Construction Logistics Strategy (that complies with DfT guidelines and European Law)

Construction Transport Strategy: Points we suggest the strategy takes into account 1

Using rail has a number of benefits*:

- More segregated than roads
- Makes Roads safer (HGVs undertake 5.6% of road km and have 9.4% fatalities)
- 37.5% of UK HGV vehicles (2009) had dangerous defects
- Road congestion is the biggest cost imposed by HGVs on society
- Rail produces only 10% of PM10 per tonne per km compared with HGVs
- Emissions tend to be further from pedestrians and households

NOTE: IN THE CHILTERNES THE HS2 RUNS PARALLEL TO CHILTERN LINE & THERE IS THE HS2 TRACE ITSELF

Don't forget: Modal Shift Benefit

Since April 2010 the DfT has calculated the additional costs of transporting goods by road based on a range of factors. The figures in the red box are averages taken from the Network Rail report (Value and Importance of Freight).

Modal Shift Benefit Costs (DfT)

Category Cost per Average Lorry Mile (p)

• Congestion	52.4
• Accidents	2.8
• Noise	7.0
• Pollution	2.5
• Climate Change	3.8
• Infrastructure	9.0
• Other (road)	6.4
• Taxation	-34.1
• Rail or Water Costs	-5.7
• Total	44.0

Whilst these figures have been estimated for the allocation of mode shift grants – and the DfT try hard to stop people using them for other purposes – they are either a reasonable estimate of the total costs of HGV or not.

Given they come from the responsible Government Ministry it is reasonable to assume they are accurate ...

Sources:

Value and Importance of Rail Freight (Network Rail, July 2010)

Mode Shift Benefit Values, technical report (DfT, INAS, Freight and Logistics Division)

Rail Capacity: Let's hear the facts

We understand that HS2 Ltd have spoken with Network Rail – who have been reported as stating 'there is not capacity' (but we have no knowledge of when the inquiry was made, how it was framed, and how seriously pursued)

Others sources who have spoken to DB Schenker report that they believe there is capacity - and apparently a willingness to undertake the work (however we have no knowledge of how this enquiry was made)

What are the facts?

We request that the committee instruct HS2 Ltd to disclose details of what work has been undertaken with all relevant rail businesses (Network Rail and Freight Operators) and provide a detailed rationale and costing options for various logistics approaches (as part of the Transport Logistics Strategy)

Tunneling: Delays and Impacts

To date no geological surveys have been undertaken of the conditions in the Amersham Area.

- Locals know that there are large voids under parts of the proposed route in the Amersham area
- The proposed route is very shallow under Chalfont St Giles and Shardeloes Lake and the chalk is believed to be far from stable

Given that if geological problems are encountered, the construction period is likely to be lengthened – increasing the misery HS2 Ltd. We petition that the committee instruct HS2 Ltd to undertake the necessary surveys as a matter of urgency and before the route is finalised

Conclusion

Amersham will be impacted significantly by the construction of this railway line. We only petition that the Committee instruct HS2 Ltd and the DfT comply their own policies and guidelines, Environment Agency Requirements, and European emissions legislation by:

- Evaluating (properly) the construction impacts on Amersham residents and businesses
- Evaluating (properly) the economic welfare impacts on Amersham residents and businesses
- Developing a construction strategy that complies with European Union emissions legislation
- Developing a 'fit for purpose' construction logistics strategy taking into account the full costs of all modal options (which we believe will result in railfreight playing a significant role)
- Undertaking a full geological survey of the proposed trace in the Amersham area – to ensure:
 - I. Residents and Businesses in Amersham can be confident on the route
 - II. The construction period is not unduly extended by hitting 'unseen problems' late in the day