

1. Petitioner information

In the box below, give the name and address of each individual, business or organisation submitting the petition. Please note that addresses here will be provided to the Bill's promoter, but will be redacted in the version of the petition published on the Parliamentary Website.

Alison Hunt

Manchester

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...".

I am elected Environment Officer for West Didsbury Residents Association. Our association's immediate interest in this petition is to be an advocate for a safe, good quality, sustainable and biodiverse environment for our community.

This response is ancillary to West Didsbury Residents Association's main objection submitted by Dr Nicola Herd.



2. Objections to the Second Additional Provision to the Bill

In the box below, write your objections to the Second 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.

West Didsbury Residents Association Environment Officer petition.
1) Increased flood risk

1.1) The Hollies vent is situated in flood zone 3 immediately flanked by flood defences of the River Mersey on one side and the densely populated urban area of Mersey Rd the other. The area selected for the vent is subject to flooding and for weeks on end in the winter this land becomes submerged under deep surface water. Construction of the vent here would exacerbate existing flood risk to West Didsbury and elsewhere downstream of Princess Rd.

1.2) HS2's flood and hydraulic modelling as laid out in AP2 is incomplete and extends less than 1 mile down the river to Princess Rd. The AP2 fails to identify/ locate any mitigation for loss of water storage capacity caused by the Hollies development. Our association considers this mitigation to be too important to be deferred until a later date and that all information should be on the table by now.

1.3) The parliamentary committee cannot make an informed decision on whether this site is safe or not when so much essential information is missing.

1.4) AP2 spends more time reiterating flood risks averted by moving the vent away from the previous location in the flood storage basin at Palatine Rd than by addressing the new, different and equally dangerous flood risks which would arise from relocating it to the Hollies which is a natural flood basin.

1.5) AP2 states that increased peak flow and altered conveyance of flood water resulting from the raised Hollies vent is likely to exacerbate flood risk to Riverside Court, Beeches Mews and Northenden golf club as well as 'unquantified receptors' downstream of Princess road. The vent and causeway are raised to a height of up to 6 metres protected by drainage channels and attenuation tanks, indicating how concerned HS2 are to protect the vent itself. WDRA wish to underline to the committee that the Environment Agency regularly needs to repair and reinforce both the upper and lower north river banks directly beneath the Hollies land due to constant erosion of these embankment by the fast flowing current as it races towards a steep bend in the river.

1.6) The need to address the very real threat of flooding which this development could cause is too important to be deferred until a further AP. The huge footprint of the development would decimate the densely vegetated area of water absorbent flood plain and permanently replace a large proportion of it with hard standing. AP2 states that loss of floodplain storage would need to be replaced by "lowering land within the River Mersey catchment to create a "managed washland area" (AP2 5.3.236) but fails to identify any suitable location for this mitigation. Stephen Cunningham of HS2 assured our association that finalised modelling and mitigation would form part of the AP2 but AP2 now tells us that this additional flood modelling/ mitigation still needs to be formulated "as far as reasonably practicable" (AP2 5.3.231/5.3.234) during 'later stages' of the passage of the Bill .

1.7) New "washland" flood storage capacity can't be created anywhere - HS2 do not give us evidence that they are sufficiently in command of the potential flood impacts resulting from locating the Hollies vent in a low lying part of flood zone 3 . We would expect independent and updated Environment Agency forecasts, reports and recommendations to have been supplied as part of AP2 SES 2.

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1.8) The removal of hundreds of trees, scrub and water meadow on the Hollies site has not been factored into HS2's increased flood risk calculations or even into assessments of the development's CO2 footprint or the capacity of trees to absorb air borne pollution. Natural riparian ecosystems such as the Hollies are increasingly recognised as vital buffers preventing excess accumulated water run off entering the river as well as acting as natural flood defences and buffers for nearby homes. We consider it dangerous to remove a green area which currently provides a 'nature based' flood defence during the ever more frequent and severe storms.

1.9) Extreme climate change scenarios are now unfolding at an unprecedented rate with records on rain and heat being broken. The flooding data provided by HS2 appears to be based on 2021 events -since then we have experienced 3 named storms including storm Franklin when water levels at Northenden Wier were at their highest levels ever recorded.

1.10) Having experienced two 1:100 year flood events (storm Christoph and Franklin) in 2021 and 2022 we cannot accept any additional flood risk to our community or to our neighbours downstream. We ask for the precautionary principle to be applied. We consider the new unknown risks posed by major infrastructure being constructed in flood plain zone 3 location to be extremely hazardous even if the vent were to be reduced in size. We urge the committee to refuse this vent location in flood zone 3.

2) Ecology and loss of habitats

No on-site ecology surveys whatsoever have been conducted at the Hollies - we consider this a breach of s 40 and 41 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act 'biodiversity duty'.

2.1) No physical ecology surveys for protected species or habitats have been carried out by HS2 on this site, therefore the ecological mitigation proposed by HS2 is founded on insubstantial information. The AP2 and SES2 make assumptions based entirely on desktop biodiversity records data previously gathered for the Palatine Rd vent. The Hollies is a riparian habitat currently comprising of at least 1ha of broadleaf woodland, biodiverse water meadow grassland and flora, dense scrub and willow carr. At least one important maternity bat roost has recently been identified at Langham Court - directly adjacent to the area now proposed to be cleared and subject to 24 hr lighting.

2.2) Many of the older trees due to be removed have cavities meaning that potential bat roosts exist within the site footprint itself. Birds of conservation concern (red and amber listed) nest within varied niches and habitats on the land due to be cleared. Densely vegetated scrub habitat is used by hedgehogs (now classed as an endangered species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature). An otter was present in the river nearby in September 2022. Notable Biodiversity Act Plan habitats onsite include broadleaf woodland and biodiverse marshy grassland. It is impossible for HS2 to claim they are replacing habitats like for like or mitigating for protected species and biodiversity action plan (BAP) species if their ecologists haven't even surveyed the site.

2.3) Considerable net loss of biodiversity will be the outcome of developing at the Hollies location rather than the Biodiversity Net Gain mandated by the the government's National Planning Policy Framework.

2.4) The presence of invasive species within the Hollies land could result in the criminal spread of knotweed which is classed a toxic waste. No assessment of this risk factor is provided by HS2.

2.5) The dense surrounding conurbation amplifies the ecological value and green habitat connectivity importance of existing riparian habitats at Hollies. Clearance of this area would cause severance of an important and established green infrastructure link connecting statutory designated Mersey Valley nature reserves which both lie less than 2 km on either side of the Hollies. These are - Stenner Woods and Millgate fields LNR (east) and Chorlton Water Park LNR

(west). Replacement mitigation planting shown on map CT-06-360-L1 is wholly inadequate to compensate the existing habitats and ecological connectivity which would be removed to make way for the vent, access road and satellite compound.

2.6) The recent Wildlife Trusts letter signed by over 104,170 people demanding that HS2 be truthful, honest and clear about the route's impacts on wildlife was handed in to Downing Street on July 26th. Our association shares concerns expressed by the Wildlife Trusts.

2.7) Additionally, part of the woodland habitat on the steep embankment beneath Mersey Meadows will have to be removed to make way for the emergency access road - this will further increase ecological severance as well as rendering the steep embankment vulnerable to subsidence.

2.8) HS2's failure to supply up to date and appropriately timed preliminary ecology reports or a realistic assessment of habitats for the Hollies vent site as part of the AP2 consultation indicates the haste with which this site was selected and, in our view, represents a breach of the Biodiversity Duty which all public bodies are obliged to observe.

3) Site traffic / Air pollution and traffic impacts of the Hollies development on the health of our community are not acceptable and have not been properly assessed.

3.1) There are already 4 Air Quality Management Areas (i.e. traffic pollution hot spots which exceed accepted safe pollution levels) within the immediate vicinity of the Fielden College access which HS2 propose to use onto Barlow Moor Rd. Air pollution is discussed at all other vent sites in the AP2 but traffic air pollution reports and detailed analysis for the Hollies proposal are lacking.

The list of 4 of existing nearby Air Quality Management Areas surrounding the Hollies vent location are.

AQMA on Burton Road, near junction with Lapwing Lane

AQMA on A5145, Barlow Moor Rd approaching junction with Princess Rd

AQMA at the junction of A5145/B5167 (junction of Barlow Moor Rd and Palatine Rd)

AQMA at the junction of A5145/A5103 (Barlow Moor Rd and Princess Rd)

The inevitable increase in pollution and particulates which 5 years of continual HGV and truck journeys would exacerbate the generally acknowledged existing poor air quality.

3.2) Table 12 page 148 of the SES2 and AP2 Environmental Statement vol 2 Community Area Reports states that the average daily combined 2 way car/LGV trips during the busy period will be 42-102. The average daily combined 2 way HGV trips during the busy period and within peak month will be 158-178. This amounts to a total of up to 280 HGV and vehicle movements every day. Given the huge amount of construction infill required these journey numbers are likely to be an underestimate.

3.3) Given that West Didsbury is a densely populated area, with a number of local schools, many family homes and Bright Horizons nursery within half a kilometre of the proposed vent site, the negative impact on local children's lung health caused by thousands of extra HGV and vehicle journeys over 5 years would be very serious.

3.3) The risk of accidents at a busy T junction near several schools is also increased. No accident reports are provided for the Barlow Moor Rd junction.

3.4) Barlow Moor Rd A 5145 already suffers severe congestion at peak times as well as parking problems. Despite proposed site access widening on Barlow Moor Rd the number of lorry movements will have an inevitable negative impact on every resident in West Didsbury including schools, the community hospital, businesses, bus routes along Barlow Moor Rd, bin collections,

cyclists, and potentially affecting emergency response time from the police station on Elizabeth Slinger Rd.

3.5) Dust and airborne particulates will be generated by excavation and extended compaction works as well as by site traffic. Due to the huge development footprint and low lying level of the Hollies site beneath adjacent roads polluted air is likely to collect beneath Mersey Rd and blow / drift straight up over the houses again putting lung health at risk.

4) Noise

4.1) No other vent of this magnitude has ever been built so close to homes, schools and places of worship. Due to HGV movements and the vent construction operations 190 residences along Mersey Rd, including large blocks of flats, will be impacted by noise all day and many by varying levels of noise by night.

4.2) The vent development is far too large and noisy to be located in such close proximity to a densely populated urban area with schools and a nursery.

4.3) Noise fall out from the vent during construction is shown in table 28 v. volume 5 of SES2 and AP2ES SV.appendix.002.00000.

4.4) Unacceptable levels of continuous day time noise are shown for both Manchester Islamic Education Trust (up to 81dB from 9am-5pm), Bright Horizons Nursery (72dB 9am-5pm) and the Mosque on Burton Rd (78db 9am-5pm) and are a factor making the continued functioning of these vital community facilities likely to become impossible.

4.5) Areas where numerous residents will be seriously disturbed in their homes during day and some all night are Mersey Meadows (74dB 9am-5pm and up to 55 dB night) the Beeches (up to 78dB 9am-5pm / 41 db at night), Langham Court (72dB 9am-5pm/ 42dB at night), all, The Hollies (74dB 9am-5pm and 45db evening and night), parts of Barlow Moor Rd (79 db 9am-5pm) the Britannia Hotel (71dB 9am-5pm) Palatine Rd (71dB day/54 dB throughout the night) Part of Mersey Rd (69dB day and 52dB at night). We maintain that the noise fall out from the proposed site is unsustainable and breaches hundreds of local people's human right to peace and quiet, education and worship. We note that the accepted recommendation background noise level at which proper sleep can be attained is 30dB or less. Night time noise at 45dB and above is considered a danger to public health.

4.6) In the long term the permanent noise from the 2 horizontal fans operating within the completed vent is likely to cause a nuisance to residents of Mersey Meadows but sufficiently clear information is again lacking from AP2.

5) Loss of amenity

5.1) 190 properties on Mersey Rd, particularly Mersey Meadows estate, would be subject to significant visual intrusion for over 5 years during construction and then to permanent views of major infrastructure during operation of the vent.

5.2) No photomontages (i.e. artificially generated visualisations) of the vent have been provided in appendix LV-001-OMA07 SES2 & AP2 ES vol 5 Landscape and Visualisations document to help the public understand how the vent would appear and impact their out look either during construction or operation. We wish to underline that every other vent on the route has 'before, during and after' photomontages to demonstrate the visual impact on the surrounding area except the Hollies vent which is by far the biggest and most impactful vent in the MA07 area. HS2 haven't even provided 'before' photos of Mersey Meadows indicating that no-one has been near the proposed site.

5.3) Mature trees would be stripped from the frontage of a Grade 2 listed 1960s building (Fielden College) damaging both the setting of the college and the amenity of the Albert Park Conservation Area on the opposite side of Barlow Moor Rd.

5.4) We consider HS2's assessment of visual impacts to seriously underestimate the damage to householder and public visual amenity at nearly every viewpoint -especially given that AP2 fails to supply visualisations.

6) Loss of and damage to footpaths

6.1) The loss of and damage to footpaths has not been adequately addressed or mitigated - no photomontages of the expected impacts of the Hollies vent on footpaths are provided.

6.2) The well used Hollies footpath and its surrounding woodland would be permanently removed as would the public footpath access to the river Mersey via Fielden college. Locals are being re-directed to the River via significantly longer routes along pavements of busy A and B roads because it would be impossible to re-open current footpaths alignments across the site post development. This loss would adversely affect the health and well-being of locals who regularly use and enjoy this valued amenity.

6.2) Views from the nationally important Trans Pennine Trail FP 139 and opposite river footpath FP 235 would be damaged both during and after construction. The tranquility and amenity of the River Mersey Landscape Character Area and Greenbelt would be permanently damaged.

7) To conclude- we have overriding concerns that the Hollies Vent is a serious threat to public safety, health and wellbeing due to- increased flood risk which is still not fully understood, to unsustainable traffic levels, pollution, loss of biodiversity and loss of amenity. Such a massive development in flood zone 3 is especially inappropriate to a densely populated urban community and would cause unsustainable ecological damage to the Mersey Valley. The vent would also negate educational opportunities for hundreds of girls at Manchester Islamic Education Trusts's school over a period of 6 years.

7.1) We assert that HS2 have failed to provide the necessary background research and information needed by the committee to make an informed and fair decision.



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 Second 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 Second Additional Provision to the Bill' if you prefer. Please number each paragraph.

As per main response from West Didsbury Residents Association submitted by Dr Nicola Herd