

322. CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr Smart. Is that it, Mr Mould?

323. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes. You have our position, Sir.

324. CHAIR: Mr Straker, do you want to make some final comments?

325. MR STRAKER QC: If I could, sir. Can I do it in this way? Can I draw your attention to a very helpful slide which was produced this morning. It's slides A1190(6) and A1190(7); if they could be put on the screen. First, page 6 shows the number of people and then page 7 shows where those people are to be found.

326. You and your colleagues, sir, have an unenviable task in relation to this particular matter because what you are being asked to do is to draw a comparison in circumstances where the material which advises us collectively over the qualities of what one sees there in the Chilterns AONB are all and always described in qualitative terms by reference to the words actually used, whereas on the other hand the chosen comparison by HS2 is one in financial terms: 'How much does it actually cost to put a railway on the ground?' or 'How much does it actually cost to dig a tunnel?' In those circumstances, the comparison that you are being asked to make is on uneven terms because it is language on one side against numbers on the other. It is there where one gets into the difficulty, which is why I have put up these slides and these numbers of people.

327. We know that the Chilterns AONB is important social capital. Call it what you will, but that is what it can be said to amount to: social capital. We know that it is part of the capital enjoyed by a vast number of people given its proximity to London and its proximity to other places. We know that those people of course are not charged when they come into the AONB, but they will see and enjoy the AONB as part of their social capital, as part of the living which they conduct and as part of the activities which Lewis Silkin described in introducing the Bill which you've seen.

328. MR HENDRICK: Can I ask a question?

329. MR STRAKER QC: Of course.

330. MR HENDRICK: People are enjoying the amenity of the area. They may be ramblers, but some of them may be motorists on the roads running through there or

indeed train travellers who are on the line that's currently there at the moment. I've travelled on high speed rail tracks in Japan and in China. Would it not be the case that, even travelling at those sorts of speeds, you can still appreciate the amenity of the landscape from a high speed rail track?

331. MR STRAKER QC: It's certainly true, sir, that those travelling on the high speed train for the 12 kilometres or so where it's above ground level would get a glimpse of the Chilterns AONB. It would be a glimpse because they're obviously travelling quite fast through. One doesn't want to diminish the enjoyment of the passengers of the train whose principal preoccupation, it may be supposed, will nonetheless be getting to Birmingham as quickly as possible, but on the other hand one has rather more people and rather a bigger consideration in terms of the AONB itself and those people who are coming to visit in the ordinary way – the present way – as opposed to sitting on the high speed train going through.

332. MR HENDRICK: Yes, but the numbers you gave are not necessarily people who are going to be walking. They are people who are maybe travelling through that area for the other reasons that you point out and not necessarily on foot.

333. MR STRAKER QC: That's undoubtedly true. There will be people who are going through the area in all sorts of ways, ranging from the cyclist through to the equestrian, through to the motorist, through to the person who's sitting on the present Chiltern railway. All of those people will be travelling through at the moment and gaining an advantage from the beauty which surrounds them in the Chilterns AONB. The difficult question that you and your colleagues have, sir, call it a privilege or a pleasure, is to consider for all of these hundreds of thousands of people how that can best be preserved given the principle that has been established of driving a train from London to Birmingham which is high speed. That privilege can best be preserved by putting it in a tunnel.

334. Sir, just to help you on the question you asked me about the people and enjoyment, I've just been passed a note which indicates that you would have something in the order of five and a half seconds on the viaducts and the rest would be in cuttings as you travel through High Speed Two as presently proposed.

335. MR HENDRICK: Just on the viaduct?

336. MR STRAKER QC: Yes, that's right.

337. MR HENDRICK: It's five seconds of pleasure you wouldn't otherwise have!

338. MR STRAKER QC: That's right. Some of the acutest pleasure in the world can be of short dimensions! I readily accept that proposition.

339. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: If you cannot see out from the cutting then you cannot be seen in the cutting.

340. MR STRAKER QC: The answer to that is that the cutting nonetheless can still be seen and noticed as an effect on the landscape. One has the point that Mr Hendrick makes very clearly. One can have in mind the passengers on the train, but one has this other, very wide picture that one has to think about and there one gets to the great difficulty which confronts the Committee: how do you value this social capital. Undoubtedly it has to be valued. It has to be valued somehow. Everybody agrees that. HS2 said 'Well, we've put in £1 billion over the line' and came up with something of a convoluted explanation as to how it valued this particular part, but even if it was giving it the forestry categorisation, the sort of figures that you then get to are very substantial indeed. What I am suggesting to you is that there must be a figure when one is doing that contrast. If there is a figure then you get so much more easily to the answer. The answer may be to provide it in the tunnel to enable all the social capital and the social advantages that exist within the Chilterns to be preserved because one can say it time and time again and one can look at the slides time and time again. This is very particular landscape. Of course, to take Sir Peter's point, one does not want in any shape or form to denigrate other parts of England through which the train will pass, or to denigrate any other parts of England at all, but the fact remains that Parliament has said that this is special and this must be treated specially. If it's going to have an impact then the answer, I would respectfully suggest, must be a tunnel. There is a whole raft of other matters which fall into line when one reaches that conclusion from the rather surprising point that the tunnel produces far, far less spoil, because you're not doing the big cuttings which otherwise have to take place when one is going through it at surface level, to matters whereby one is protecting against noise, environmental loss, visual damage and all those matters that Natural England identified and which I asked the witness about. So I respectfully urge that the Committee goes down that particular line.

It doesn't matter for the purpose of my case whether the end figure in terms of the assigned value to the social capital is a given sum or not, but just concentrate on the idea that this is social capital and it has to be taken into effect.

341. MR CLIFTON-BROWN: You've very helpfully put this map up for us which shows the M40 going straight through the Chilterns AONB. Presumably exactly the same arguments were advanced when the motorway went through – this loss of social capital – and it was deemed at the time that a tunnel wasn't warranted. The entire motorway could have been tunnelled. What's the difference between this HS2 railway and the motorway in terms of damage on the AONB?

342. MR STRAKER QC: Two answers. I doubt, sir, that the same arguments would have been put forward, partly because, as indicated by the witness in answer to me, it's over the last 15 years or so that there's been this development in thought and appreciation of social capital. Second, the fact is that the M40 as part of the national motorway network has an effect which serves the Chilterns as well as other parts of the country, so that one can go along the M40 and one can come off and go to Wycombe or go to other places and so forth either in or adjacent to the Chilterns, whereas with the HS2 railway all one has, I'm afraid, are the 5.5 seconds that have been identified.

343. MR HENDRICK: That's just on the cutting though.

344. MR STRAKER QC: On the viaduct, yes.

345. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: There is more than one.

346. MR STRAKER QC: I beg your pardon?

347. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: There is more than one.

348. MR STRAKER QC: More than one viaduct?

349. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Isn't there?

350. MR STRAKER QC: Yes, yes.

351. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: We could get to 10 seconds if we tried hard enough!

352. MR STRAKER QC: You may be able to and you may have a particularly acute

sense of vision and so forth and perceptive powers, but you're not going to have long. Sir, the answer to your question I give as a twofold, double-barrelled answer, if I may. It would have been different for the M40. We have moved on since then and consider these matters in different ways. Sir, that was what I wanted to say, unless I'm reminded of anything.

353. CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr Straker. There is one more item you're going to raise with us and I think you've got some slides.

354. MR STRAKER QC: Yes, sir.

355. CHAIR: Thirty minutes?

356. MR STRAKER QC: Sir, I suspect that it might take more than 30 minutes because there turned out to be somewhat more than was originally supposed to be the case – if I can find them.

357. CHAIR: Do you want two minutes, Mr Straker?

358. MR STRAKER QC: Sir, it might be useful just to clear the decks a bit.

359. CHAIR: Let's give you five minutes.

360. MR STRAKER QC: Thank you very much, sir.

361. CHAIR: Order, order.

*Sitting suspended*

*On resuming—*

362. CHAIR: Order, order. Mr Straker, please continue.

363. MR STRAKER QC: Sir, could I put up slide 1218(1) and, whilst that's being put up, say that I'm more than usually in your hands, sir, so far as this is concerned because this exercise, as that slide reveals, is to set out summaries of issues that may be raised by the councils after the recess. It is not intended to be an exposition of those cases, nor is it intended to be a restriction on what may subsequently come to be said and nor is it intended to be a restriction on what others might say, but it is merely to give you, sir, an

indication of what these matters are.

364. CHAIR: To assist the Committee?

365. MR STRAKER QC: That's right, sir. So that's why I say I am more than usually in your hands as to how quickly or how slowly you wish me to take these particular matters.

366. The next two slides make the sort of point that I've just been making. Slide 1218(3) draws attention to the fact that we've worked closely with various others who are there set out. Obviously that will continue and so that will have a bearing upon the timetabling for the exercise when you resume your deliberations after the recess. I just emphasise at slide 1218(4) the points about how we will still continue to seek agreement, or we hope that the Promoter will continue to seek agreement with us, and what will come by way of the autumn's evidence.

367. Can I then, sir, go to slide 1221(1) because what these next few slides seek to do is indicate the sorts of topics which have been raised by petitions so that you get a feel for the matters which are going to be canvassed by petitioners in the autumn. Slide 1221(2) says what would remain and slide 1221(3) reveals that a very large majority asked for the tunnel and a limited number didn't refer to the tunnel but asked for other matters.

368. The petition point themes are then set out in a number of slides, which would obviously embrace those people who wanted a tunnel in any event and those who just were content to raise these matters. You'll see there shown graphically out of the 905 petitions what the damage point being canvassed by the petitioner is and how particular themes were raised. Slide 1221(5) shows that approaching 70-odd per cent were concerned with noise and some 40-odd per cent, I think it is, concerned with soil dumping. Passing on to slide 1221(6), there are construction and petition point themes emerging there. I don't read those out. The next slide shows what the councils, Chiltern, Bucks and Aylesbury Vale District Council, will between them cover. You will see, sir, that there is a considerable number of items, starting with landscape and the AONB, including deficiencies of the ES and running over to local site-specific issues. I can take these more slowly if you would wish me to, but there are plainly a number of issues there. Sir, unless corrected, I am not going to simply read out every word which is contained within these slides.

369. Going on to slide 1221(8), there are going to be some themes expressed in terms of principle and dealt with on a route-wide basis by lead councils and other points will be reflected by way of local example by the Buckinghamshire councils. The balance of this is still being finalised – partly, sir, it’s ease of work on the part of the councils and partly, sir, it’s a recognition that it’s more sensible for you, it is hoped, to have someone taking a lead on one issue rather than many repeating it to you.

370. Slide 1221(9) draws attention to the fact that designation of the AONB is relevant to many of the themes. And I can pause at that stage to leave the Chilterns District Council there. I’ll return to matters which they particularly raise. But I’ve drawn attention now to the general themes in the petitions.

371. And go back to that which Buckinghamshire, in particular, will be concerned with. So, if I can take you to 1219(2)? Waste and sustainable placement, which has been spoken to on a number of occasions and given various labels. Sustainable placement being mentioned in 1219(3). And, sir, that provides a sensible queue to me to draw attention to the fact that the opportunity was taken, of the invitation for these slides, to put in evidence, as A1222(1), if that can be taken up? The document, the handout which was given on the site visit, sir, which you will recollect, which took place, it was thought to be useful, particularly perhaps, it may be thought ,for those new members of the committee, all of who are welcome, of course, to visit the Chilterns and these areas, in any event. But, one will see for example, if one goes on to 1223(24), that Hunts Green Farm, as a, then, proposal for a permanent spoil heap is discussed and described. Now, of course, it’s suggested for a temporary placement of spoil.

372. CHAIR: Can I just ask a question about that? At some point, Mr Mould, the soils going to have to be shifted. How long after? I mean, is that going to be soon or is it putting pressure on the road network, or will it be at a rather later date?

373. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, it’s going to be a facility that will be operating so as to hold back material and regulate it being distributed through the road head at Rocky Lane. So, clearly the temporary storage area will have to be sufficiently extensive to enable it to perform that role. I suspect that if you look at it at any given time during the duration of its use, that the extent of storage is likely to rise and fall, because obviously material will be coming into it at different rates, and material will be taken away at

different rates. But, what I am conscious of the need to do, in time, certainly, in good time for hearings, which will touch on these issues in more detail, is to be able to give a much clearer, a more detailed understanding of how that facility is likely to operate, so that we can, for example, give a sense of what the overall extent of the area required for temporary storage is going to be.

374. CHAIR: Alright. Okay. Mr. Straker, sorry to interrupt you.

375. MR STRAKER QC: Not at all, sir. Thank you very much. And I can mention also, if we go back to 1219-3, that that provided a prompt to go where I've just shown you in the handouts for the site visit. I mention, but don't ask to be turned up, that one can also go to 1224(12), to see similar references to the spoil dumping in the handout but I don't take those now, for the purpose of time. I go then, if I may, to 1219(4), the Calvert community mitigation plan, the Calvert area cumulative impact, a matter to be raised. Once again there are references in the handout to these pages 1224 and following. 1219(5) shows the areas with which on that particular matter is concerned and I don't need to dwell upon it. 1219(6) seeks a community plan assurance. 1219(7) seeks an East-West Rail station at Steeple Claydon. This is referable to the East-West Rail line of which you may have heard, which is a railway being funded, at least in part by local authorities to provide east-west links and to restore some connections which some time ago were removed from the railway network.

376. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: It stops in Cambridge.

377. MR STRAKER QC: It includes that.

378. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: The Zuleika Dobson line.

379. MR STRAKER QC: It's part of that, and takes into account Milton Keynes, as well, and places of that sort. Milton Keynes being declared to be a new town on the very day that the railway was closed in Milton Keynes, which was connected thinking by someone. 1219(7) is the Steeple Claydon Station and the passive provision for that is diagrammatically shown at 1219(8). And 1219(9) draws attention to the East-West Rail impacts and mentions in fact Milton Keynes and London (Marylebone), Aylesbury and Princes Risborough. And the committee may know that there are going to be some improvements. The London (Marylebone) one is going to be able to get to Oxford from

there.

380. CHAIR: So, the passive provision is that in the bill at the moment or is that something that?

381. MR MOULD QC (DfT): No, there isn't any passive provision made for a station at Steeple Claydon. No.

382. MR STRAKER QC: I can then move to the landscape. Buckinghamshire County Council, 1219-10. How that matter will be pursued before the committee. The assurance is noted as to what is sought and the assurance no doubt will be worked up. And 1219-11, Aylesbury linear park will be raised. And 1219-12, the community and environment fund and business and local economy fund. The committee has had, I think, some reference to this already. And that will be canvassed by the County Council or is predicted to be canvassed by the County Council.

383. 1219-13, takes me, just as a heading, through to transport petition issues overview and that then has 1219-14 route wide issues, transport assessment inadequacies, unsuitable construction routes and sensitive junctions. I'm not reading out particulars of the roads concerned. They're there on the screen. And can be seen. 1219-15, route wise issues, additional transport burdens and the widening of carriageways and impacts on cyclists and pedestrians, seeking provision of such footways and cycleways where deemed appropriate.

384. 1219 takes me from Buckinghamshire County Council into the Aylesbury Vale District specific issues. Impacts, 1219-16, onto inter-Aylesbury routes and the 4010 realignment and that is shown in 1219-17. Aylesbury Vale 2, at 1219-18, and here one is talking about particular roads there recorded, including Waddesdon and the relief road required to mitigate impacts on Waddesdon Village and the A41. And the committee will know that Waddesdon is a particularly attractive place. And Aylesbury Vale 3, 1219-19, Calvert, Steeple Claydon and Turweston.

385. Then still under the rubric of the County Council, but by reference to Chiltern District specific issues, 1219-20, Wilton Park relief road, the provision of haul roads with maximum use of the railway trace sought to mitigate the use of unsuitable rural lanes. 1219-21, offline solutions sought so as to prevent long term temporary closures

with long diversion routes, and examples are given; provisions of cycle ways; and sensitive junctions requiring improvements. 1219-22, public rights of way. They're enumerated and the number of concerns are broken down. 23, the next slide, towards discussion about such matters but a number of points of significance remaining and assurances being sought.

386. 24, 1219-24, takes us to ecology. Additional surveys being sought. Cumulative impacts being assessed, is suggested. 1219-25, connectivity of habitats is mentioned. Assurance 4 sought is on specific sites issues which are there referred to but not to read out by me. 1219-26, biodiversity, specific species impact and local authority costs. And that's to do with the burdens been placed upon local authorities in connection with certain assessment matters. Which takes me to 1219-27, water and flooding, with modelling sought and further information also sought.

387. We then come to Council assets, 1219-28. And these are County Council matters, so one sees certain assets which are impacted upon, schools and so forth. Buckinghamshire, of course, being education authority. And then one gets to 1219-29, the council's request of HS2 to protect public assets and service users, specific undertakings sought.

388. Cultural heritage is next, 1219-30, dealing with historical environmental records. 1219-31 takes us to archaeological investigations and a programme of archaeological works. 32, to community engagement and an archive of archaeological finds. 33, the effect of spoil dumping on archaeology. Visual impact, assurance 7, on the setting of history environmental assets. And assurance 8, the impact of ecological and landscape mitigation on archaeology.

389. That enables me to leave that which is under the heading of Buckinghamshire County Council, though some were specific to those two districts, and to take me to the Aylesbury Vale. And the first matter here, which is via 1220-2, is the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough Railway. And here there's a cross reference which can be mentioned, but doesn't need to be taken up, in the handout, 1222-11. And that seeks assurances about the closure of the line or reduction in passenger services. 1220-3 refers to the Stoke Mandeville maintenance loops. Once again, these are referred to in the handout for the site visit 1222-9, we don't need to go there, though I give the reference.

The assurance required is suitable mitigation scheme, consequential upon the maintenance loops. 1220-4, the Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury by-pass extensions including linear park. This is a consequence of a redirection of traffic which will occur through the by-pass proposal and what is sought there, as is shown on the slide, is for the extension of relief road, and a road link. Details there are given in brief form. Shown on 1220-5, by way of aerial photograph with markings upon it.

390. Aylesbury Vale next, at 1220-6, support Buckinghamshire in connection with the Waddesdon relief road and at 1220-7 –

391. CHAIR: Can I ask a little bit about that? When we met the Speaker, we were in that local hall there, there was some discussion about this. Are you aware whether the County Council is promoting a by-pass at the moment?

392. MR STRAKER QC: I don't know the answer to that question, sir.

393. MR TETT: When you say by-pass, we are asking for a by-pass as part of this because of the HGV traffic movements through that village. We haven't current plans for a by-pass.

394. MR MOULD QC (DfT): My understanding is that there is a local, there's an aspiration amongst local developers to create a by-pass. The railway's position is that we don't do anything to inhibit the construction of a by-pass, but the traffic, our latest figures, in the light of the review that you've heard about touched on over the course of the past few days under the aegis of Additional Provision 2, is that the quantity of HGV construction vehicles going through that area is actually going to be reduced substantially.

395. CHAIR: Okay. There was an example of a by-pass being provided in Northants where, everybody is chipping in, if you see what I mean.

396. MR STRAKER QC: Yes.

397. CHAIR: To get an outcome. Clearly, somebody has to start the ball rolling.

398. MR STRAKER QC: Yes, Well, I hope that helps in answering your question, sir. And I'm grateful for the assistance provided sir. There's nothing, so to speak, on the

books of Aylesbury Vale at the moment. It's coming through this scheme. 1220-7, Quainton Station Road over bridges, once again with Buckinghamshire, and the consensus that the scheme is over-designed or engineered for the rural location. And then 1220-8, Calvert Bechstein's bats and this is support be given, if required, in connection with that matter and there's a cross reference which I can give, but not ask to be shown on screen, 1224-5. 1220-9, Calvert waste sidings, also referred to in the handout, 1224A, and this is some sidings opposite residential properties thought to have a detrimental effect upon the residents within. 1220-10, cumulative impacts in Calvert, and there the points are made in short form in the slide on display and it's also referenced in the handout, 1224-9, 12, 15, 13 and 14. 1220-11, Calvert cumulative impacts, takes us also back to the East-West Rail and the re-opening of the disused rail, Oxford-Bletchley, and the link to Aylesbury and it's sought that matters should be dealt with in an integrated manner. 1220-12, Calvert cumulative impacts community and mitigation plan. And 1220-13 continues that particular matter, seeking amongst other things that the lighting impacts of the railway line should be addressed. And there's a plan in connection with those matters just discussed at 1220-14. 1220-15, recreation ground at Turweston and support given to the parish council, here about the loss of the recreation ground.

399. And, next slide, number 16, ecology, route-wise, supporting the case presented by Bucks and others. And 1220-17, noise, route wide. And, sir, I mention here, if I may, that the expectation is that this will be within the generic case the noise consortium is presenting with Camden on the construction noise impacts. 18, 1220-18, landscape, route wide.

400. And 1220-19, traffic, route wide, with Aylesbury supporting the case presented by Buckinghamshire. And attention will be drawn, 1220-20, to some listed buildings being demolished along the route. Photograph of Glebe House, Hartwell. And the next slide shows, 1220-21, Wendover Dean, the farm, an example of adverse effects along the line. And we get then to 22, not getting the tunnel, significant detrimental effects, a number of topics need to be considered. 1220-23, Wendover Green tunnel, so this takes us to the character of that, the screening bunds proposed, the land take, to facilitate the above mitigation is insufficient. And there's a point just to make in passing here, Because of course, there's the mitigation which is capable of being provided by HS2 is

within the line, which is available to them under the terms of the bill. The next slide, 24, Wendover aquifer impact, concerned about the effect of construction activities. And 1220-25, alternative site, please, for the Wendover Cricket Club. 1220-26, construction impacts on communities. 1220-27, provision for construction workers accommodation, particularly so it doesn't overwhelm smaller communities and there's a cross reference here to the handout 1222(2). Design, 120220-28, standard and quality of design, the undertaking sought, also cross reference to the handout 1222(2) and 1222(6). And then, finally, here, heritage issues, noise insulation and the impact on settings of listed buildings, 1220-29.

401. And that then means that I go back to the Chiltern slides and pick them up again, please, at 1221-10. Mitigation as far as communities and businesses are concerned and that touches upon the community environment fund. 1221-11, community and businesses protection during construction, referent to highly impacted communities, impact on businesses of construction, development of business relocation strategy and funding for an economic development officer to promote economic development in the area for seven years. And then the community and businesses, 1221-12, with North Warwick being the lead in connection with this and this seeks funding for compensation for the loss of revenue because of loss of business rates during the period of HS2's construction in particular. That's 1221-12. 1221-13, air quality, a route wide theme being led by the London Borough of Camden. 14 continues with air quality and draws attention to the want of air quality monitoring. And 1221-15, seeks comprehensive monitoring in relation to nitrogen dioxide and particulates before work commences. 1221-16 refers to the lead of Camden on cultural heritage. And 1221-17 draws attention to cultural heritage and raising of local concern concerning certain buildings, some of which are referred to in the handout which was given to members at the site visit, 1223-3, 22 and 22.

402. And then ecology, 1221-18, support given to Buckinghamshire there. And landscape, townscape, and visual assessment, 1221-19, once again a matter being raised. 1221-20 continues the point about landscape, townscape and visual assessment; seeking, amongst other things, sensitive integration into the historic and natural landscape. 1221-21 continues under that heading, refers to sustainable placement dumping and one can cross refer to the handout again in connection with the matter.

1223-23, 24 and 12. And traffic and transport is next, 1221-22. Also referred in the handout, 1223-14 and 22. Artificial lighting follows in the next slide, 23. Concern about the use of artificial lighting. Waste and material resources, 24. Concern about what is described as the re-sculpting of the landscape. And then 25, water resources and flood risk assessment, which is followed by some specific sites where there are issues. 26, Amersham vent shaft, also referred to in the handout, 1223-4. A number of further sites, 27, which then goes to a point, at 28, about the vertical limits and the limits of deviation there provided for in the bill. 29, Council resources. 30, the summary overview of the generic route wide sound, this is the noise consortium, and that is revealed, 31, as LANC, seeking to deal with and having 13 supporting members, generic route wider issues on sound noise and vibration. The lead authority on sound noise and vibration being Chiltern District Council, and construction, London Borough of Camden. And then, slide 32 just records a certain amount of progress to date. 33, records key discussion categories: National noise policy; Observed adverse effect levels; and uncertainty to and risk to stakeholders. There then follows a series of slides touching upon the discussion categories, 34, where it's suggested there is an inconsistency between the general principles document of the environmental minimal requirements and its interpretation in the information papers. 35, observed effect levels, discussion category, and how that is dealt with and the HS2 justification for some of its adverse effects, how that is considered. Discussion category 3, risk and uncertainty to stakeholders post Royal Assent, that's slide 36. And that follows over, into slide 37, with the next steps for noise being identified at 38, the continuing engagement and so forth. And the slides which thereafter follow on the 122 –

403. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: You're spelling out what we're going to be hearing. I hope I'll be allowed to think aloud? But, if it's possible for the lead authorities' knowledgeable people to speak with Mr Thornely Taylor during the gap between hearings, it will be much more helpful to have, if possible, an agreed list of what is not agreed, rather than having to go through and detect as we go through. It would be very helpful if it's possible in areas where there might be differences of view, an overlap of view, to know, together, what is that they haven't agreed.

404. MR STRAKER QC: Well, sir, that is certainly the intention on the part of the authorities. The way to a particular destination is paved with good intentions, but, I

hope that those good intentions can be satisfied.

405. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Well, let me say this. It is also the intention of the promoters. And indeed I think I can give some reassurance on that, because the process that you have just commended has been in place now for, certainly since beginning of this year. And regular meetings have taken place and they will continue to take place with that objective in mind.

406. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: Sorry.

407. MR STRAKER QC: Not at all. The balance of the slides that were prepared for today, A1222-1 and following, I'm not proposing to go through. Those were the handouts which the committee were given, those members of the committee who were able to attend. Obviously –

408. CHAIR: The visit, you mean?

409. MR STRAKER QC: The visit, yes. The site visit. Obviously, if there's any opportunity for those committee members who didn't attend and who would wish to attend, then we can make that available, whether it's tomorrow or any other occasion. If the committee's not sitting tomorrow, I'm sure that people would be happy to entertain committee members tomorrow. And, I don't mean lavishly entertain, by the way. Yes. So, that is what I was going to do, sir, in connection with those slides. Unless you want me to go through those site visit handouts, which I wasn't proposing to do, but, I hope to give, and I trust that I have given, at least to some extent, a foreshadowing of the cases to come, an indication of what it is, without either trespassing too much on your time today. Alternatively, without upsetting subsequent hearings in the sense of having recited now material which you're going to hear again, expressed slightly differently, on a future occasion. I do emphasise that we don't see ourselves, so to speak, as restricted by what has just been said. Though, obviously, that provides the back cloth as to what will come.

410. CHAIR: Can I thank you for going through a lot of material very quickly. I think it's helpful the committee, and indeed helpful to the several hundred petitioners, if they know what their local authorities, many of the issues, in which their local authorities are going to raise in detail in the negotiation. And therefore I think it's been a useful time

to walk through some of the issues and concerns which the local authorities have, and I think the fact that the local authorities are working together, I think is a good thing. The handouts we got on our visits were very well done by the staff at Buckingham County Council and from the other local authorities. So, thank you very much Mr. Straker.

411. MR STRAKER QC: Thank you, sir.

412. CHAIR: You have no final comments, Mr Mould?

413. MR MOULD QC (DfT): No. It was very helpful to us too, of course, because it gives an indication of where matters lie, which we can use as a continuing prompt as well.

414. SIR PETER BOTTOMLEY: It can be relied on, the promoters, if there's a point they know is going to be coming up, if they can satisfy the petitioners, the petitioners will be told in advance of coming to see us.

415. MR MOULD QC (DfT): Yes.

416. CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much.

417. MR STRAKER QC: Thank you, sir.

418. CHAIR: We end session now. I'd be grateful if you could withdraw, so we can clear our thoughts. Thank you. Order, order.