

ENQUIRE WITHIN

Question: *The High Speed Rail 2 project will pass close to where many people live in Greenford and potentially create a huge impact on our way of life with the initial construction disturbance and the subsequent noise of high speed trains passing regularly through our community and all communities along the route. Should we oppose it?*

Answer: The voters had a clear choice at the last election, but how blunt a tool is the ballot box on complex issues like this one?

On Thursday 5th May last year, the General Election was held. Let us be blunt!

If you voted Conservative, you voted in favour of the HS2 project and the ensuing chaos and disruption it will cause for many years to come, along the whole route and through the beauty of the Chiltern Hills.

If you voted Labour, you voted in favour of the third runway at Heathrow, increased flights and associated noise, and the crude destruction of Sipson.

If you voted Liberal Democrat, well, you have been utterly betrayed by your party and whilst feeling some sympathy, I suggest that you don't ever do it again. It is not good for Britain.

We in Britain tend to pride ourselves on our democratic traditions, but when it comes to sensitive individual issues, it doesn't really work very well. That is why single-issue referendums are not really a good thing either. We need a better, perhaps a more local way of decision taking, rather than leaving it all to central governments?

How many people who voted last May understood the implications of their choice on matters such as the running of the whole national economy, let alone matters like HS2? And yet, there it is.

If a Labour government had been returned last May, we would now be engulfed in a similar campaign to stop it and save Sipson.

The good people of Ruislip (where the photograph was taken) who are now campaigning to stop the HS2 rail link to Birmingham also voted for it by electing a Conservative Member of Parliament.. Their member of Parliament, Nick Hurd MP is trying to use a straight bat on the subject, but he is a member of the Government and so in favour of HS2, but he feels the heat of opposition to the project from the very people who voted him in. An unenviable position to be in!

Is there a solution? Not really, in any practical sense.

Both the Heathrow third runway and the HS2 projects are caused by our life-style and our demands as modern people. The fact is that many people, including you and me!) want to travel swiftly in comfortable trains and planes, and they want to do it whenever they wish, night and day, and cheaply, and if this causes other people problems, well that is the

high cost of the way we live. It would be too simple to describe this as selfish. It is just the way we have come to live. Going back is not an option, or is it?

The impractical alternative is to change the way we live, but nobody is going to vote for that, are they? The Green Party have discovered that political reality. That change will only happen when forced upon humanity. It will happen when the oil runs out, and when the food available is insufficient in Europe and children go to be hungry. It will happen when people steal food and even kill for it. The writing is on the wall, but nobody wants to read it because it is too scary.

I often joke about how when the oil runs out, we will hear the sound of horses' hooves along the A40, but remember, in those far-off days when people rode horses as a major form of transport, it was very expensive to keep, feed, shoe and house a horse and the poor had to resort to Shanks' Pony. The honest truth is that under our system of Government and style of life, some people will always feel that they have been trodden on and there will be no redress.

