

The Archbishops' Council has submitted a petition on the HS2 Bill to Parliament, regarding treatment of burial grounds and human remains.

A Church of England spokesperson said "In terms of 'opposition' the C of E is not opposing HS2 per se, rather we are petitioning for a technical change to the Bill, i.e. we are opposing the Bill in its present, in our view technically deficient, form. It is simply a matter of re-instating a clause which can be found in other legislation relating to development and has been left out of this Bill."

Background

There will be thousands of exhumations, but not at Kensal Green where HS2 runs underneath in a tunnel. It is likely there will be a significant number at the three sites, but we do not have reliable figures.

One of the problems such projects face is that it's difficult to judge the amount of time and money which will be needed to deal properly with human remains.

Individual churches near the line are opposing the Bill and have sent in their own petitions. We hope to achieve better mitigation and where necessary compensation for these churches and their communities. We are particularly worried about the effect on Chetwode St Mary in Buckinghamshire, but there are others.

Main burial grounds that will be disturbed

- Euston St James Gardens, London, to be cleared (actually in St Pancras parish), 18th-19th century.
- Kensal Green cemetery London, tunnel underneath (so no exhumations).
- Stoke Mandeville St Mary old church, Bucks / Oxford, to be cleared (a ruin, with burial ground probably 12th century to 1905)
- Park Street / Curzon interchange, Birmingham 18th-19th century, to be cleared.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/archbishops-council-submits-petition-hs2-bill-parliament>