

Camden Cutting Group Annual General Meeting 2017

26th April 2017, Steve Smith Tenants Hall

Co-Chairs: Luisa Auletta, Matt Hollier

Secretary: Jackson Toms-Limb

1. HS2 Update

Tracey Bailey (“TB”, HS2 Engagement Officer) started presentation by reminding the audience that Royal Assent had been granted in February this year, and that since then there had been preparatory / early works ongoing in the area, including ground investigations, trial bore holes, and the demolition of the National Temperance Hospital on Hampstead Road. The enabling works contractor is onboard to perform these works; the main works contractor is being procured currently, to start work in the summer this year. The HS2 Bill sets out the planning consent ‘envelope’ within which the scheme must be built. Now they are iterating the detailed design within this envelope.

TB provided an overview of the “Euston Mitigation Measures” which is the latest design concept for the approach into Euston Station for the HS2 railway, through the Camden Cutting. TB stated HS2 think EMM is an improvement on previous design, and are working through an impact assessment to confirm that there are no worse impacts than stated in the Environmental Statement and this would be available mid-year.

The tunnels approaching the station will be deeper, and will emerge approximately 200m further south (level with Silsoe House). The bridges will not need to be demolished and rebuilt as trains will be able to run under the existing clearance. Granby Terrace and Hampstead Road bridges will still need to be extended. Less utility works should be needed, as well as less work on retaining walls, and there will be less access issues for Park Village East (PVE) as the previous ‘cantilever’ of PVE will not be required. [Please see attached Chairs report on EMM and plans].

TB referred the audience to HS2inEuston office on Hampstead Road, and the commonplace website <https://hs2ineuston.commonplace.is> where people can now sign up for email alerts. The next construction evening is 18th May and construction leads will be present to answer questions.

The issue of trespassers was raised, and it was confirmed that Network Rail are responsible for security of the railway cutting.

The issue was raised of Network Rail (NR) taking 20 days to respond to noise complaints (caused by current preparatory works). TB stated that response times should be quicker for issue resolution, and that this would be raised with NR by HS2.

Luisa Auletta (LA) highlighted that HS2 tendering process was different to that used for Crossrail, as they are producing tendering ‘limits’ but leaving the contractor to prepare the design, within these limits. This means that the contractor could produce and build a different design as long as it fit within HS2’s tendering limits.

The issue was raised that the tunnelling and cavern proposed to be built underneath Parkway and Park Village East was very risky. TB stated that HS2 have confirmed technical feasibility, so it is unlikely the contractor will say it can’t be done.

TB confirmed that the plan is still on track to deliver the first phase by 2026.

Issue was raised that the tunnel entrances ('portals') were now closer to Silsoe House so this was worse for those residents. Also that the existing train sheds currently provide a level of noise insulation and that these were being removed and not replaced. TB confirmed that the sheds were being removed and that this is now being planned to take place during daytime hours when noise insulation (NI) trigger thresholds are higher, so this can take place before NI is in place.

TB stated that the NI program is starting now and will still be in place before works that exceed the trigger thresholds starts.

LA highlighted that there will be a deck over the HS2 tracks on the PVE side of the Cutting, so this would provide some noise insulation during the operational phase.

TB agreed HS2 to consider a 'noise test' (whereby they would make a noise equivalent to that which will exceed the trigger levels so that residents could appreciate what this would be like for them), as well as chasing NR to provide noise readings for the current works (which residents noted were causing significant disturbance for prolonged periods already and with no mitigation or compensation offered). It was pointed out that those being disturbed were on the other side of the cutting – phase 4 of the NI programme, not just those in phase 1.

David Auger (DA) requested HS2 provide a 'proper response' for all these issues raised now, at the next NI Working Group.

<HS2 left the meeting>

2. Working Group Updates

Co-Chairs of CCG, Luisa Auletta (LA) and Matt Hollier (MH) provided an update on the various working groups (WGs) where community representatives were meeting with HS2, Camden Council, NR, TfL and others to work through issues. These include Noise Insulation (NI), Traffic, Design, Air Quality, Trees and Open Spaces; there are also meetings with HS2 for ECRG (Euston Community Representatives Group) and with Camden Council.

MH started with an update on Noise Insulation WG. HS2 have agreed to provide independent assessment of the secondary effects of NI including heat, damp, and air quality, noting that this does not include assessment of the actual noise reduction benefit from the NI. The survey will be undertaking a sample of local houses, so if you are contacted to take part it is suggested that you do.

Another issue the WG has been tackling is that of non-standard installations, for example where internal features in a room prevent standard internal secondary glazing from being installed. External secondary glazing in exceptional circumstances has now been agreed by HS2, and Camden Council have agreed to this for Listed buildings on the basis that it is temporary and must be removed once the project is completed. NI installation is due to start in September. The WG is also discussing how noise complaints (from current NR works) are not being adequately addressed. The audience was encouraged to complain to NR every time they are disturbed (to ensure they have a full record of the extent of disturbance being caused).

The audience was reminded that HS2 paper 'E23' covers details of the NI proposed by HS2 and further information on NI in Camden and on E23 can be downloaded here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-noise-insulation-around-euston-in-camden>

The audience was encouraged to take part in the HS2 NI survey to determine what NI they will be offered, and to get the process started in time even if you then decide not to have it installed once manufactured. There was discussion of installing NI for yourself and requesting HS2 to refund you for this, in response to which it was suggested that people review carefully the steps required for this approach as stated in E23, but it is not encouraged to follow this approach as then HS2 will have no liability for how well the NI works. The audience was also reminded that listed buildings consent is needed for all forms of NI (which HS2 will apply for if the installation is done by them).

LA gave an update from the Traffic WG, which meets fortnightly. A major issue here is that it is believed that the traffic limits have been set borough-wide rather than being road specific, which gives HS2 flexibility to route many more trucks down local roads if it balances out across the borough (subject to Camden's approval process). It is also noted that HS2 can put up to 25 HGVs down any road without any restrictions. LA described the Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) such as cranes and engineering equipment with engines, for which the WG is pushing for stricter exhaust emissions limits, as the Cutting falls outside the Central Activity Zone for London where tougher restrictions apply. LA also stated that the WG had met with the enabling contractor Costain Skanska JV (CSJV) who had seemed more willing to engage with the community than HS2 has.

The WG is also working on mitigating loss of resident parking, and ensuring road quality (which could suffer from damage from high-volume HGV traffic) is monitored and maintained by HS2.

LA also updated the audience on the Design WG. The Government is currently tendering for a Euston Master Planner, to oversee the holistic redevelopment of Euston Station (including HS2 and NR sides, and the Cutting), with development opportunities in the 'Station Approaches Zone' (i.e. the Cutting) focused on residential use and stretching up to Mornington Street Bridge. It is assumed this will cover the HS2 side of tracks only due to structural limitations of building above NR tracks, but this is not restricted within the master plan if it is found to be possible. Camden Council retains planning approval for surface structures built by HS2 such as head houses, so the community needs to engage the Council to ensure best possible design.

MH and LA noted there were gaps in coverage of the WGs for CCG, including Air Quality, Trees and Open Spaces, as well as a need to start considering how the community should apply for funding from the HS2 Funds agreed for mitigating community impacts. It was noted that the Committee for CCG has had several long-standing members stand down recently and thanks was given to them for all their efforts, but that the audience was encouraged to volunteer as new committee members to ensure the work of CCG could continue through the next phase of the HS2 project.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.