

Newsletter

Spring 2018

CHARGE

Camden HS2 Association of
Residents' Groups for
Engagement

By and for residents affected by HS2 in Camden

This is the newsletter from the umbrella group helping coordinate the activities of the residents' groups and TRAs affected by HS2. Find out more and sign up for updates at chargegroup.org.

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Complain to HS2

You can complain to HS2 as explained [here](#). You can get their attention by ensuring that there are formal complaints about the things that are bothering you.

Tips: please specify it is to be treated as a formal complaint. Please request an escalation whenever you are not happy with their response. Eventually you can get it to the HS2 CEO and the Complaints Commissioner. Please send a copy to your CHARGE rep (listed on the last page) if you can, so we can keep track.

Council elections

CHARGE is strictly non-partisan but a CHARGE committee member, Steve Christofi, who has worked hard to reduce the impacts of HS2, is standing for election as a councillor on May 3rd. His website is nw1vote.com.

Compulsory purchases

We continue to press HS2 to ensure that compensation is paid before taking possession. We recommend that you take independent advice immediately if you receive a letter saying that HS2 intends to compulsorily purchase your property.

Demolitions and construction

Demolitions continue and will accelerate around Cobourg Street, Drummond Street and Melton Street over the next twelve months. Hoardings have been put up around most of the buildings to be demolished.

Daisy Froud

Daisy is the independent facilitator picked by the community and paid for by HS2. In February 2018 it was confirmed, after some deliberation, that the Community Engagement Framework for Camden that we have been working on with Daisy will be the HS2 Local Engagement Plan for Camden, and that there will only be one Local Plan for Camden (previously one was proposed for the north and one for the south of the borough). Daisy has since prepared an initial draft of the Plan, which community reps are now reviewing. We will be meeting with John Parrott in early May to firm up the practical sections on how the agreed engagement principles will be delivered in practice, with a set of linked commitments. The plan is to publish Version 1 of the Local Plan this Spring, to be followed by a Version 2 – with wider community input and any additional required sections – later in 2018.

Community liaison with Camden Council

We await the outcome of Camden Council's follow up with Rob Carr of HS2 Ltd about a potential 10 mph limit on a small number of residential streets that risk seeing high HGV volumes due to HS2-related traffic.

Keir Starmer MP

Public Meeting 8th May 7:30 p.m.

Please note that there will be a public meeting with Sir Keir Starmer QC MP on 8th May at 7:30 p.m. at Netley School to discuss the impacts of HS2 and your concerns.

A small group of community representatives now meets regularly with Sir Keir to update him on issues of concern to Camden residents and businesses and to enlist his support in drawing these to the attention of the government and HS2 Ltd.

Sir Keir recently met with the current Chairman of HS2, Sir David Higgins (DH).

Compulsory Purchase process: In response to Keir's comments about the difficulties that had been encountered by constituents facing compulsory purchase, DH accepted that it was completely unsatisfactory for payments to be delayed until after people had moved out but argued that HS2 were constrained in what they could do in terms of making advance payments by Treasury rules. He undertook to investigate and report back on what flexibility existed under the present rules and Keir made clear his readiness to intervene with Treasury ministers if necessary.

'Euston Mitigation Measures' (the proposed new scheme for the approach to Euston through the Camden Cutting): DH stated that the proposal was viable, that it would be constructed within the AP3 limits and in full compliance with the EMRs, and that there was no possibility that HS2 would go back to the earlier scheme. Work continues on details of the new scheme – including on whether 6 or 7 platforms would be required at Euston and how best to maximise the transport of spoil and materials by rail. HS2 wants to have a fully worked up proposal covering technical aspects, cost and scheduling before putting the revised scheme out for public consideration. HS2 were still the best part of a year away from putting in the required formal planning application for the scheme. He undertook to advise further on what more could be said about the scheme at this stage in advance of the public meeting on 8th May, so that Keir could provide an update.

'Prolonged Disturbance Compensation Scheme' (the Government/HS2 response to the House of Lords recommendation on a construction compensation scheme for Camden and other urban residents): Keir was assured that work on the proposed compensation scheme was progressing well and that, while there would not be a formal consultation – which would slow things down – there would be an opportunity for those affected to provide comments on the basis of draft proposals that would be made available before the end of May. Nothing was yet set in stone, and comments would certainly be taken into account in finalising the scheme, but there was a commitment to treat home owners and tenants equally. Keir underlined that it would be helpful to have details in time for discussion at the public meeting.

Station design and impact on local community: DH emphasised the central role of Camden Council as the planning authority and compliance with the Euston Area Plan as the overall 'control document' in achieving a good development and design outcome for the Euston area.

Despite those warm words, HS2 has already ignored the Euston Area Plan in designing a station with no replacement green space near to the Drummond Street area and the lost St James's Gardens and no direct entrance from the new station to Drummond Street.

DH claimed that achievement of good permeability for the station, north-south as well as east-west, would be a major potential win for the community. He said that he recognised the importance of protecting and preserving the unique character of Drummond Street and the surrounding area and said that HS2 were encouraging the use of local restaurants and other facilities by employees and contractors as well as providing advertising hoardings to promote local businesses more widely.

However, CHARGE understands that the Drummond Street Traders have suffered an approximately 40% loss of business since HS2 closed the Ibis and Thistle hotels and have not found HS2 sufficiently supportive.

Noise insulation: Keir noted the extremely slow rate of progress on this programme and the perceived very unhelpful and restrictive approach of HS2. DH undertook to investigate and report back on what more could be done, including on the installation of mechanical ventilation.

They will meet again on 18 July (which will be shortly before DH steps down as Chairman at the end of that month).

HS2 working groups

After the Act was passed, various Working Groups were set up with representatives from the various residents' groups, to hold HS2 properly to account about things too detailed for the Euston Community Representatives' Group (ECRG) to be able to cover.

1. Traffic

a. Lorry routes

Camden Council ('LBC') has approved HS2's first Lorry Route application for Early Works Contracts, including demolitions and site preparation. There appears to be no limit on the numbers of lorries allowed on TfL's network of main roads (the TLRN). LBC noted its concerns and desire for more information in the decision letter.

We expect HS2's application for more lorry routes to be filed with Camden shortly after the council elections in May. HS2 continues to refuse LBC's request for a community representative to be allowed to attend pre-application discussions with LBC. We are strenuously pushing for HS2 not to be given blanket approval for all relevant roads and unlimited amounts of traffic for the entire time of the project, leaving Camden with no way to hold HS2 to account.

b. Speed limits

We are still waiting for the results of HS2's study of imposing 10 mph limits if lorries must unavoidably go down residential streets like Stanhope Street. The delay is now unacceptable.

c. Traffic

The large amount of rat-running down Euston Street following HS2's closure of Cardington Street without any impact study has resumed. We have complained loudly, urgently and repeatedly to Camden and HS2 about this incompetence and we are pressing for urgent action. This sets a very bad precedent for future road closures and is not an acceptable way of planning diversionary routes.

d. Dangerous road works

We continue to press for prior scrutiny of proposed roadworks after HS2's contractors created two dangerous sites on Hampstead Road, the layout of which had to be modified to make them safe after complaints by residents. If there is an accident, it is quite clear who will be to blame.

2. Air quality, open spaces and trees

We are consistently highlighting the links between poor air quality and poor health. Imperial College, London has applied for funds to carry out a longitudinal study of residents' health during the construction of HS2. There is also a possibility that King's College, London will be looking at the impact of poor air quality on the health of children in our area.

All HS2 air quality and dust monitoring monthly reports are available online, and the March 2018 report can be found [here](#). We have successfully argued for additional PM10 monitors in the Euston area and these are now online.

We believe HS2 are planning a Meanwhile Use open space on part of the National Temperance Hospital site. Although this is likely to be in a highly polluted area, we welcome the fact that HS2 are trying to address our real concerns about the loss of open space east of Hampstead Road. We urge residents to make the most of any new and improved open spaces.

We continue to press HS2 and Camden to match up to their promises to find places for replacement trees where they are being lost, including moving or re-designing intended utilities where possible, rather than pretending that a new tree in Primrose Hill is a 'replacement' for a mature tree with a large canopy, lost near Euston Station.

HS2 has insisted on using for replacement TfL bicycle stands a stretch of Drummond Street next to the TfL pebble-dashed vent shafts where the Drummond Street Business Improvement District intended to pay for greenery and outdoor seating. We consider this another loss of open and green space and will press for mitigation.

A new [app](#) tells you how many cigarettes' worth of pollution you are exposed to every day. The air in many places in Camden is equivalent to smoking several cigarettes a day. Please email your London Assembly Members and the London Mayor to bring emissions standards in London up to those of better European cities.

3. Station Design

We have objected at length to various aspects of the current design, including the proposed lack of direct access from Drummond Street and HS2's intention to concrete over the remnants of St

James's Gardens, and have made suggestions which would better match HS2's professed intention to restore green spaces as close as possible to where they have been removed. So far we have seen no sign of progress, although the new station designers Arup/Grimshaws have promised to consider those issues.

We are very disappointed to have been told repeatedly by HS2 staff that there was no masterplan, only to discover that the newly-published minutes of the December meeting of the [Euston Strategic Board](#) contained discussion of a 'landowners preferred option' for that Masterplan. In view of the refusal by HS2 and the government to allow a permanent residents' representative on these boards and the lack of any timely information about them, it seems these options are being developed without any discussion with the communities who will be most directly affected.

4. Noise Insulation

A very worrying new development is that HS2 seems to have backtracked on its original promises to offer proper mechanical ventilation accompanying its offer of secondary double glazing to those who will be worst affected by construction noise. If noise forces people to keep their windows shut, without a flow of air many homes will become unbearably hot in summer. There will also be additional problems of damp, condensation and mould, as noted in the Independent Assessor's interim report. We are pressing HS2 to stick with its original promises about ventilation and are discussing with Camden Council what can be done.

5. North Camden

HS2 has declined to publish any information about proposals for Camden north of Hampstead Road Bridge for over 18 months, although it has verbally indicated that the current design proposal is radically different to the Hybrid Act proposal.

The North Camden Working Group with HS2 held its first meeting in November 2017, including representatives from Camden Cutting, Park Village East, Primrose Hill, Adelaide Road and South Hampstead (Alexandra Place) community groups. The Working Group covers HS2's Main Works contract in Camden north of Hampstead Road Bridge. This contract is a design and build contract, unlike the contracts for the station and over station development. It includes Camden Cutting (including portals, tunnels and cavern), the main tunnels, and the Adelaide Vent Shaft. as well as confirmation that Alexandra Place Vent Shaft is no longer needed despite continued legal notices to nearby residents. HS2 has included Zoo Car Park, local utility work and local traffic impacts within the Working Group scope.

HS2 stated it was applying pressure on the Contractor to move the tunnel alignment in Primrose Hill further east to reduce impact on property currently located over the tunnels (as promised in the House of Lords Select Committee hearing). HS2 has declined to comment on draft minutes of the meeting produced by community representatives.

The meeting scheduled for September 2017 for HS2 to explain the new station approach proposal and mitigation did not take place. The scheduled April 2018 meeting which was intended to include a presentation of the new station approach, tunnel alignment and vent shaft proposal was limited to Terms of Reference for engagement meetings and some smaller items (utility service alterations and

zoo car park). HS2 have recently sent confirmation that presentation of this new Main Contract works will be further delayed till June.

Community representatives notified HS2 that they were not prepared to attend the April meeting because it would not include any significant information. Instead they requested HS2 to send details of the smaller items (eg utility works and zoo car park) that HS2 wished to discuss and asked HS2 to forward draft terms of reference.

About CHARGE

CHARGE coordinates the activities of the various residents' groups and TRAs in Camden that are affected by HS2. It is currently chaired by David Auger. The current representatives appointed by the residents' groups from each area are:

Amphill – Fran Heron

Camden Cutting Area East Side – Phebe Robinow/Christy Rogers

Camden Cutting Area West Side – Luisa Auletta and Matt Hollier

Drummond Street and surrounds – John Myers

Primrose Hill – Jeff Travers

Regent's Park Estate – Steve Christofi and Ursula Brown

Somers Town – Slaney Devlin

South of Euston Road – Jo Hurford

North Camden Group – Tony Connor

In addition, Camden Civic Society and the HS2 into London group are currently represented by Dorothea Hackman (with Hero Granger-Taylor deputizing) and by Mary Burd or John Neve.