

Summary of Euston Planning Brief Stakeholder Workshop – 7th March 2017

Over 100 key stakeholders were invited to this first stakeholder workshop on the 7th March 2017. Thirty attendees included representatives from community groups; the Wellcome Trust, The Francis Crick, BIDs and land owners. Details of the comments provided as part of the workshop session and a list of the groups and businesses represented can be found at appendices 1 and 2.

The workshop provided a refresher on the Euston Area Plan and set out the purpose of producing a Planning Brief, information on its coverage and programme for production and sought ideas on what we should be prioritising in developing the brief. The session began with a welcome and introduction from Councillor Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning.

1. Presentations

There were presentations from the London Borough of Camden; HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and Crossrail 2 and Studio Egret West (consultants to London Borough of Camden). A brief summary of the presentations is provided below.



Sabina Nizamuddin, HS2 Ltd; Gemma Liscoe, Network Rail and Isabelle Adams, Crossrail 2 gave a presentation on their planned work in 2017, including updates on stations masterplanning and RIBA2 work and NR and Crossrail 2 design development work. Then we plan to break out into discussion groups to identify any priorities or current issues for the new Planning Brief to consider.

Mary-Ann Lewis, Euston Area Team Programme Manager's presentation covered:

- the reasons for producing a planning brief,

- the limitations of the planning brief
- A refresher on the Euston Area Plan and the policy framework for the Planning Brief
- An update on initial work on the planning brief and programme for production

David West, Studio Egret West

Outlined some of the existing problems with Euston that the Planning brief would be seeking to address and introduced the workshop discussions by running through eight issues for the attendees to consider in the group discussions.

2. Group discussions

Two group discussions followed the presentations, with healthy debate about priorities for the area amongst the four groups. Discussion identified a host of different views and ideas some of which were complimentary and others which were opposing. Themes that emerged strongly through the discussion included:

- the need to provide routes through and across the site;
- activating station facades and routes;
- public open space provision and the need to provide a high quality public realm with provision for the local community;
- the need to address buses and taxis – reducing their impact on the public realm while making them easy to find and use.



A summary of the discussions is provided below with more detailed feedback provided in appendix 2.

3. Workshop discussion 1 – topics: a 21st century transport hub and uses

Stations

- *What do you think the role of a 21st century transport hub should be for its users and as a neighbour?*

The challenge of designing a station that works for travellers and also minimises the impact on local communities was recognised. There were suggestions that the station needed to provide for local communities and a theme that re-emerged in all group discussions was that it needed to be more than just a station. All groups identified the opportunity and need to create a sense of place and the need for a mix of uses, while also providing a station that works for travellers. Most groups discussed the need for the development to be green, recognising the need to address poor air quality in the local area.

- *What can the new station offer the surrounding community?*
Discussions focused on the need to provide links to surrounding communities and through and across the site. There was a common view that the development should serve the needs of local communities through the provision of services, leisure and art facilities.

Uses

- *What uses would you most like to see delivered at Euston?*
Public, green spaces and child friendly spaces were a reoccurring theme as was the desire for affordable homes and workspace. There were differing views on the type of 'offer' that Euston should provide with some calling for high end retail and restaurants and others for a more 'day to day' offer. Three of the four groups wanted to see provision for small, independent shops and businesses.
- *What aspects of the existing character of the area do you think need to be reflected in any new development?*
Participants were keen for the existing heritage and architecture of the area to be referenced and respected in future designs. One group highlighted the need to retain an element of calm in the new development and groups again referred to the need for the development to be permeable.



4. Workshop discussion 2 – topics: open space and getting around

Open space

- *What should the character of new open spaces around the station be like?*
The need to provide trees and greening was referenced by all the groups. The role of trees and greenery in mitigating air pollution and the need to provide safe spaces

were also mentioned. Groups thought that spaces should be fun and flexible and that there should be a variety of provision in the planning brief area. Groups again referenced the need to provide permeable spaces and some suggested that the edges should be activated, while other suggested that the spaces should be screened.

- *How can Euston Square Gardens be improved? How should they be reinstated or should we consider re-arranging their layout notwithstanding their protected London Square status?*

There was no clear view from the initial workshop on the re-orientation of the Gardens, with some people in support and some against. However, community groups have provided additional written comments on the workshop questions (see section 5 below) and through this it is clear that there are some members of the community who feel strongly against moving the location of the Gardens.

Getting around

- *What should the nature of new and upgraded routes across and around the station be?*

Participants welcomed the idea of a north/ south green spine and recognised the challenge that the changing levels across the site create. Groups were keen for safe, active and attractive links to be provided and they supported a link to St Pancras to be provided/ retained. Community representatives highlighted the need for the funding of maintenance if estate roads are used.

- *What are your priorities for taxi, cycle and bus provision at Euston?*

Participants were keen to address the impact of buses, with some groups questioning the need for them to be all located in one place suggesting that they could be distributed across the site. Groups also recognised the need to make buses easy to find and use and were keen for the impacts on local residents to be considered, with a preference for buses to stay on Euston Road. The need to prioritise pedestrians was raised and there were also calls for taxi provision to be carefully considered.



5. Written Community Response to the EAP Euston Brief Workshop

Following the workshop the community submitted a written response to the questions and ideas for discussion presented on the day. The community highlighted that any reductions in local amenity in return for vague promises of future benefit, particularly when there is still so little clarity as to what may be possible on top of the station or over the tracks in the throat would be unacceptable. They highlighted the need for specific proposals before they felt they could express firm views but set out some guiding principles in response to the topics explored at the workshop. The community emphasised the importance of open space, the need to minimise impacts on local communities and the need to consult and engage the community on future proposals. The full response is attached at appendix 3.

Workshop discussions

Participants recorded their thoughts and responses to the questions posed on large worksheets. Responses are recorded below.

Workshop discussion 1 – topics: a 21 st century transport hub and uses	
	<i>What do you think the role of a 21st century transport hub should be for its users and as a neighbour?</i>
Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local shopping centre • Active frontages • Balance needed in provision for Local community vs the users of the station • Be outstanding not littered with shops/ things • Break down barrier of concept of concourse • Cinemas • Concourse – benefits to central and at front • Concourse and quality should benefit new station – grand space, principle purpose, shops also important • Development and placemaking of equal importance as the transport interchange • Easy place to navigate and use – permeable • Education and research • Green space • Improved access to the underground • Leisure and night time economy • Make station more passenger friendly • Minimise pollution • Minimum disruption to existing community/ neighbourhood • Must have identity – more than just a station • Need to prioritise masterplan/ placemaking • Part of cityscape – more than just a place to get a train • Place to live on site “village vibe (e.g. Stratford) • Proper interchange • Public not privatised • Public realm – but not hard surfaces – keep and replace green and soft. Trees... better for air quality • Reinstate street market • Retention of existing architecture of historical significance

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seamless station integration – easy and quick for passengers moving walkways? • Separate retail and concourse • Single servicing – one entrance • Sustainable economy – co-working. Not just retail • The ‘greenest transport hub’ • Want to see other positive example of good station design
<p><i>What can the new station offer the surrounding community?</i></p>	
Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leisure centre • Active frontages could benefit community • Air quality a concern • Arts, cultural for community • Bespoke design – practical and useable • Better cycling routes north/ south • Better links to Regents Park • Child friendly – practical, play • Commercial forces will join the two stations • Community space committed to in new e.g. certain percentage • Design should encourage links to existing local communities – line of sight & sign posting • East/ West and North/ South links • Education facilities • Exhibitions/ community uses in station? • ‘Gardens’ for those in flats • Green Eversholt Street to make it attractive • Green space that serves/ relates to residents • Health Services • Lungs for community • Market place • Meeting place • Multiple routes – north/ middle/ south • People living in flats need open space • Poss agreed list? Priorities for community assets

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential conflicts • Regents Park Estates to and from Ampthill to and from Somers town (access and footfall for community) • Removing green space – replace green space • Retain views for residents in taller buildings • Schools – concern over air quality/pollution • Schools engagement – build process , curriculum • Somers town a contained area – the integration of this community needs consideration • Sports, e.g. table tennis • Station could offer more to the surrounding community • To serve people who live locally – not just offices • Two significant redevelopment areas with a residential area in the middle
	<p><i>What uses would you most like to see delivered at Euston?</i></p>
<p>Uses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable workspace and affordable homes No. 1 priority • Children’s play – e.g. fountains @King’s Cross • Community meeting rooms/ space • Concern over high buildings – micro climate • Cycle racks • Danger that community groups get pushed into unattractive areas. Lack of larger/ accessible spaces. Crick: not open in the evening for the community. Presume from academic side – not necessarily welcome by community • East and west open spaces for residents • Green spaces – gardens and internal – e.g. Sky gardens at Fenchurch Street • Height of buildings? • Independent businesses – local ability to grow • Independent retail and entrepreneurship – less clone • Issues with providing health • Leisure facilities for all ages – e.g. cinema • Market/ village vibe • Markets e.g. Camden/ Box Park/ Pop Brixton • Outward facing development • Positive street conditions • Public space – community can hold events, festivals

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small independent shops e.g. Bindley Place • Split between desire for high quality/ class retail, restaurants and social space • Truly affordable housing • Willingness to accommodate non- commercial uses
	<i>What aspects of the existing character of the area do you think need to be reflected in any new development?</i>
Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of calm important in new design • Deck – green space in throat Regency architecture of north • Greenery • Improve air quality – mixed character • Inactive facades calming • Link to existing knowledge quarter • Local authority adopted roads, i.e. not Kings Cross • Maximise use – permeability of Euston Square gardens • Reference to memorials in St James’ Gardens • Respect existing architecture/ heritage of the area • Respect human scale • Retain central taxi rank (keep in one place) • The arch? A reference or restoration? • What happens with history?
Workshop discussion 2 – topics: open space and getting around	
Open space	<i>What should the character of new open spaces around the station be like?</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees important for pollution mitigation • Informal spaces important – learn from Kings Cross (Granary Square) this split opinion – some thought it was a good examples others had an issue with it being private land. • St James Gardens underused due to safety concerns • Euston Square Gardens is cut off from community • Curation of space – can we guarantee the kind of investment required to maintain the space? • Permeable(?) Edges • No buses or taxis around them – calm

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees • Fun – flexible usage • Green screening from railway/ taxi/ road (St James gardens) • Active edges • Plant & tree life • Colour • Friendly • Art, including statues • Green screening from Euston Road • Town centre • Variety of different types of green space • Consider moving St James’s Gardens across Hampstead Road • Calm and air quality better • Green not hard • Some resident only/ owned space – including where pedestrian lines go through estates Chalton – Ossulton • Community gardening and growing • Fountains and water • Green space east and west not just north and south • Possibly temporary planting • Don’t want open space surrounded by high buildings • Green roofs and open spaces on top of buildings
Open space	<p><i>How can Euston Square Gardens be improved? How should they be reinstated or should we consider rearranging their layout notwithstanding their protected London Square status?</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euston Square Gardens a resource- do not reduce Euston Road presence • Buses should be removed – keep buses on Euston Road • Extend the square to the south of Euston Road – consider building that face onto space • Need to keep visibility to the station • Feels like a leftover space • Avoid built frontage all the way onto Euston Road – retain a green edge – development forming a ‘T’ • Provide a centrepont like café at Russell Square • Urban garden – with softness

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain London Plane trees • Seating • Stay as is • Rotate • No barriers/ railings • Get rid of buses through gardens • Pedestrian routes • More seating (not necessarily benches) • Street market on the north/ south spine • Deckchairs in summer • Can it be bigger in re-provision? • A less formal garden – undulating ‘natural’ • What can be done about Euston Road? • The fundamental problem with usability – crossings • Meanwhile provision • Why don’t people use the space? If it’s because of Euston Road then should consider moving it • Possible ‘T’ shaped gardens • How to deal with rough sleepers? • Screen off Euston Road
Getting around	<p><i>What should the nature of new and upgraded routes across and around the station be?</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of green spine • The challenge is the levels • Phoenix Road nice at the moment • Needs flow of people. Signage is not clear enough • Improved crossing of Euston Road • Green spine good solution (cycle track). East west link from St James Park over the tracks make it work • Hang out space • Regent’s Park link • Colourful • Friendly

Euston Area Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Well lit • Activity • Frontages onto routes • Not steps (access for all) • Public • Maintain link to Kings Cross • 24 hours open • New crossings on Euston Road • Subways? • E/W routes are for pedestrians and cyclists? • New routes enhance and don't effect community uses, e.g. funeral/ weddings outside churches • Green spine – the route is sensible • Direct foot traffic away from estates. Pay to maintain estate routes if used.
Getting around	<p><i>What are your priorities for taxi, cycle and bus provision at Euston?</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep buses on Euston Road – it undermines Euston Square Gardens. • Smaller terminus can be located around the station • The design of the square will determine whether buses can be successfully incorporated • Integrated model, i.e. Toronto modal level • Taxi to the north • Taxi to the south • Safety • Impact on neighbours considered • Find them easily • Easy for pedestrians • Pedestrians/ public comes first • Town centre • Unsatisfactory arrangements for unlicensed taxis at present • Buses need to be accessible but closer to Euston Road • Future proofed as best as possible

Euston Area Plan

- Restrict taxi standing/ drop off with 2 way in/out – no looping on site
- Move bus stop around station – not all in one place
- Can bus station be relocated? It's a barrier
- No set down space for mini-cab/ uber – this should be addressed?

Appendix 2 –Attendees

Community & Business Representatives
Organisation
British Library
Camden Cutting Group
Camden Peoples Theatre
Camden Town CAAC
Camden Town DMC
Darwin Court Residents Association
Drummond Street Tenants & Residents Assoc
Francis Crick
Euston Town
Knowledge Quarter
London and Continental Railways
London Assembly member
Maria Fidelis School
New Horizon Youth Centre
NHS Camden
Origin Housing
Park Village East Heritage Group
Regent High School
Regents Park Tenants & Residents Assoc
Royal College of General Practitioners

Scene & Heard
Somers Town Community Centre
St Pancras Parish Church
Sydney and London Properties
The Magic Circle
The Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum
Urban Partners for Kings Cross, Euston & St Pancras
Wellcome Trust
Wesley Hotel
Organisers & Presenters
Organisation
Crossrail 2
Greater London Authority
High Speed 2
London Borough of Camden
Network Rail
Studio Egret West
TfL
Wilkinson Eyre
WSP

Appendix 3 - Written Community Response to the EAP Euston Brief Workshop

Community Response to the EAP Euston Brief Workshop Held on 7th March 2017

We are responding to what David West called ‘shaping principles’. We were interested in some of the ways in which these principles were framed: for example talk of ‘the need to engage with the public realm’ and of ‘healing the hole that the new station will create.’

However, we need to know more detail about what such phrases mean. We also note that David West said the shaping principles were changing. Most of us only noted eight guiding principles, although the speaker suggested ten. This left us a little uncertain as to how much is on the table to be potentially changed.

The community is not prepared to accept any reductions in local amenity in return for vague promises of future benefit, particularly when there is still so little clarity as to what may be possible on top of the station or over the tracks in the throat. We need specific proposals before we can express firm views but set out our guiding principles below:

1. Re-providing St. James’s Gardens

The loss of St James’s Gardens (‘SJG’) will create a need for a replacement quiet park of at least commensurate size accessible from the Drummond Street area. The Gardens need to be fully re-provided as a natural and calm green space, capable of supporting mature planting, trees and grass. It is important that residents in the Drummond Street area have access to a local park with play area for young children within 280m and without having to cross major, dangerous roads.

The re-provision needs to be a proper garden letting people enjoy nature, especially when many of the pocket green spaces in Regents Park Estate have been built on and other parks are full of outdoor gyms, play equipment and ball courts. St James’s Gardens should be more like Camley Street Natural Park in Kings Cross and not the kind of tightly controlled public space that has been provided in the gas holders there.

New provision should not be exposed and windy or have a major road as one of its boundaries and it should not be surrounded by taxis (even if these become electric in due course). Railway lines adjacent – if in a cutting – would be acceptable.

Sufficient depth of soil to accommodate mature trees of the same quality as those currently present in SJG is vital. A park must have sunlight and therefore overshadowing must be minimized. The community would welcome transfer of the replacement for SJG to a trust such as the London Wildlife Trust.

The only reasons that the Gardens are not currently as well used as they could be are that they feel neglected, have too few exits and are surrounded by buildings which turn their back to them (and some of which are blighted). The long inactive blank wall of the station from an earlier extension of the station does not help. The problem is not that the Gardens are the wrong kind of green space.

We do not consider that the open space to the north of the station as currently proposed by HS2 is a proper replacement for SJG. This space, if it remains, could be an exciting public square on several levels but must not count towards open space (park) provision as its amenity and setting are too compromised. (It is above the concrete roof of the train shed and is too exposed to wind and road and rail traffic noise.)

2. Euston Square Gardens - orientation etc.

Euston Square Gardens ('ESG') contain and are surrounded by many historic and listed elements, including the gatehouses and railings, and listed buildings. The form and orientation of Euston Garden Square is historic and must be respected. The setting of the Listed Buildings to the west, south and east of the square must be preserved or enhanced. The square is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and therefore must, according to the legislation, be 'preserved or enhanced', together with the many trees given extra protection by virtue of being sited within the Conservation Area. We would welcome planting that further reduces pollution, for example a hedge on the inner side of the railings.

The community is not prepared to contemplate the addition of a T-shaped element running north from the Gardens without a clear knowledge of what is being proposed on the rest of the site. In any case, that extension could never be a replacement for quiet green space for community use, as described under the first heading above. Any northwards extension must be in addition to local community green space to replace SJG and other losses.

The community would welcome measures to encourage more biodiversity and wildlife on the Gardens and throughout the site, especially wildlife corridors.

The very large old plane trees that ring the Garden (two on the South West corner, three at the Eastern end – two of which are just outside the railings – and one just beyond the North Eastern boundary) must be retained. The other trees on the square and to the north of the railings should also be retained so far as possible and works must be planned sensitively with this aim in mind.

The community feels very strongly that retaining large trees is of enormous importance to ensure the restored public space is of the highest quality and is successful in creating an immediate sense of place within a newly landscaped area.

3. North-South Green Spine

The community would be happy to see a pleasantly planted and navigable north-south pedestrian and cycle route given the loss of a safe cycling route along Cardington Street. It is essential that this be a 'street' as required by the EAP. It should be an important urban place in its own right and not be just a token walkway over the station. It cannot provide compensatory green space for SJG or ESG; it should, however, be compensating for the loss of Melton and Cardington Street and the loss of the many beautiful mature street trees there. As an urban place it should have a streetscape and accessible live architectural frontages and multiple crossing points at civic spaces.

However while a final plan for the station is at least one year away it is not acceptable to use the proposals for planting above the station as a replacement for green open space lost from elsewhere. The green spaces that are being lost by the residents of the Regent's Park Estate and the Drummond Street area should be replaced as close to them as possible.

4. Shared concourse with positive East West connection towards southern end

We believe that this is a good idea.

5. Improved East West links (elsewhere)

While east-west links were included in the EAP and are important to some local people, though less important for others, these should only be constructed with no loss of any key community priorities. Permeability must be extra in addition to the existing, which must remain intact and improved.

A link would be appropriate and should be feasible at the northern end of the station so that it is possible to cross by foot and bike without having to go round to the north of the Amptill Estate. This link could replace the footpath from Hampstead Road to Barnby Street with a more easily navigable and public route.

Amptill residents would have concerns about safety and access should an east-west crossing be constructed as previously envisaged. An alternative alignment just

south of the Royal Mail depot would be more acceptable as this would reduce negative impacts and improve safety.

We reject the trading of Euston Square Gardens for permeability – that is not an acceptable compromise.

The decision not to go with a level deck design means much of the potential for redevelopment is lost. We are left with a very compromised station design for the second time in the lives of some older residents. The harm that was done 50 years ago, by bringing the station south and so dividing our community, is unlikely to be put right, and certainly not in an elegant fashion.

We also refuse to give up existing and planned open space to achieve targets for office space and new housing or East West permeability.

6. Reconsidering the Station footprint

It should be minimised, apart from a visible concourse.

7. Active station edges

We strongly support this, ideally with a mix of homes and other uses. There should be no more dead blank walls like the side of Cardington Street and Eversholt Street. Retail should include smaller units for independent shops and designer/maker units. There should be business space for small starting businesses (like Camden Collective).

8. Potential for tall buildings

The community does not accept the principle of any buildings higher than the existing buildings on the existing plots without more detailed proposals.

9. Taxi provision

Given that vehicles are likely to be non-polluting by 2033, the community believes that consideration should be given to putting taxi provision (if such a concept will even have any meaning by then) back in a basement (or perhaps on top of the station) with an entrance and/or exit on Euston Road. Space at ground level should be reserved for pedestrians where possible. There should not be above-ground taxi provision to the north of the station.

10. Buses

Moving the bus station/bus stops further away from current provision is problematic both for travellers and local people. The need for any significant additional walking to buses reduces effectiveness of Euston as a transport hub and disadvantages those who must rely on buses for onward or local transport. There needs to be a proper assessment carried out that takes into account the needs of both those coming into Euston and those living locally which should include the needs of disabled, mobility and sight impaired, wheelchair users, families with small children and/or pushchairs, and people with bulky/heavy luggage, etc.

11. Better pedestrian and cycling provision to cross Euston Road

There should be a separate cycle underpass with an entrance in Gordon Street, in addition to a much better pedestrian crossing or pedestrian underpass. Cycles should be kept away from buses and provision made away from main roads where air pollution is too high.

12. Ensuring that residential areas remain quiet and calm and do not become through routes

This must be an overall guiding principle. The increased train services will inevitably result in an increase in car traffic. Strong planning needs to happen to ensure that that traffic is kept on main roads and away from currently quiet residential side streets. One test to which all traffic (and construction) plans must be put is: what will be the impact on local residents?

13. Crossrail 2

We acknowledge that the 2015 consultation document is soon to be replaced, and wish to set down some principles for development.

- The western station entrance must be located within the existing footprint of Euston Station.
- Construction sites in Somers Town must be minimised.
- Construction traffic through Somers Town must be avoided.
- Work must be co-ordinated with the British Library extension works to minimise pollution and disruption to residents.
- Open space used as construction sites should be brought back into the public realm as quickly as possible.

Residents from the Churchway Estate should be consulted as to whether they wish their area to be included within the planning boundary brief.

14. External Station Appearance

The appearance of the station should be designed in conjunction with the local community, not presented as a fait accompli with only minor changes possible.

15. Proposed Planning Brief Boundary

The community believes that it should not include Gloucester Gate junction or the Mornington Crescent/Hampstead Road junctions as currently proposed.