

**Report to the Department for Transport
CONFIDENTIAL**

Euston Area Plan and HS2 scheme compatibility

Executive Summary

This report has been produced by the Euston Area Plan (EAP) team to respond to the recent HS2 designs for Euston Station based around retaining the tracks and platforms at their existing level and developing the HS2 station alongside the existing Euston Station (HS2 revised design, Option 8). This approach is radically different to the station design approach developed by HS2 to date which involved lowered platforms and tracks and rebuilding a joint HS2 and classic station (the baseline scheme, B1). The EAP team have been working with HS2 throughout the development of the EAP, a joint planning document for Euston produced by Camden Council, the GLA and TfL, to understand, shape and reflect the emerging station designs as much as possible. The emerging EAP masterplan and plan objectives, consulted on late last year, therefore reflect the HS2 baseline scheme which was being developed until February 2013 and assumed there would be scope for a comprehensive approach to station development, new streets and development.

An assessment of the compatibility of the new HS2 revised (option 8) scheme and the latest baseline scheme iteration (B1 value managed) against the established EAP objectives and design principles has been carried out to determine the impact of the different designs on implementing the aspirations of the EAP. A summary of the findings of this assessment and supplementary work undertaken by consultants on the economic implications are below.

Economic implications

An addendum to the EAP economic vision report by GVA estimates the following high level implications for development capacity, floorspace and gross value added to the economy resulting from the EAP masterplan, HS2 baseline (B1) and HS2 revised (option 8) schemes for the station area and decking up to Hampstead Road:

	EAP masterplan	HS2 B1 VM	HS2 revised (option 8)
Homes	2,930	2,260	1,700
Jobs	10,135	6,800	3,900
Employment Floorspace (sqm)	210,000	136,000	79,000
Gross value added of employment	£690m	£460m	£270m

The timescales and information available to make this assessment have necessitated a high level approach based on the potential impact of station designs on the strategic masterplan maximum capacity estimates, which are still being refined, see appendix 1 for details. We have assumed some OSD above the HS2 and existing/redeveloped station in all the estimates, but it is not clear how much of this will be able to be delivered. See appendix 1 and 2 for details.

In summary the GVA reports on economic and employment implications (appendix 2 and 3) highlight that a transformational approach to rail infrastructure and facilities (the EAP masterplan or an amended baseline (B1) design) in the Euston area can create a scale and mix of uses that can contribute to the long term value and economy of Camden, London and the UK economy. This will enable the transformation of the public realm,

image and identity of Euston Station, replacing poor quality facilities which have constrained investment in adjacent areas for decades.

A comprehensive approach also results in a place-making scheme that will fundamentally transform Euston, with a focus on overcoming physical barriers rail infrastructure presents, creating a new framework for East-West connections between Regents Park and Kings Cross and enhancing the quality of the public realm, image and identity of the Euston Area.

Assessment against EAP objectives and design

The main body of this report is an evaluation of the two HS2 schemes against the EAP objectives and design principles. This assessment highlights that the revised option 8 station design (reuse) does not meet or only makes a small contribution towards achieving the majority of the plan objectives, despite the best efforts of the HS2 design team over the last two weeks to improve the performance of the design against these. HS2’s own station design option sift process last year illustrated the significant problems associated with retaining the existing tracks and platforms at their current level, particularly in terms of the poor compatibility with over site development, rail operational issues and urban design issues including poor integration with existing surroundings and poor massing implications.

A summary of the assessment tables evaluating compatibility of the EAP objectives and design principles with the two HS2 station designs is shown below:

	No compatibility – the design <i>does not contribute</i> towards meeting the EAP objective
	Poor compatibility – the design makes a <i>small contribution</i> towards achieving the EAP objective
	Significant compatibility – the design makes a <i>significant contribution</i> towards achieving the EAP objective
	Full compatibility – the design <i>meets</i> the EAP objective
	Not clear – Sufficient information and details are not available to make an assessment.

Euston Area Plan Objective	HS2 B1	HS2 option 8
1. Prioritising local people’s needs		
2. Securing excellent design		
3. Making the best use of new space above the station and tracks		
4. New streets above the station and tracks		
5. Providing jobs and boosting the local economy		
6. Creating sustainable development		
7. Improving the environment along Euston Road		
8. Promoting sustainable travel		
9. Enhancing existing public transport		
10. Planning for future public transport		

Euston Area Plan Design Key Principle	HS2 B1	HS2 option 8
1. Improved Euston Road		
2. Extend & strengthen Drummond Street		
3. Extend Phoenix Rd to Robert St		
4. New north-south retail street		
<i>Improving station relationship with Eversholt Street</i>		
5. Extend & activate Coburg Street		
6. Reinforce east – west connections – additional routes (e.g. Polygon – Varndell St)		
7. Network of integrated open spaces		
8. A new permeable piece of city		
<i>Creating traditional urban streets with active frontages</i>		

The revised option 8 scheme represents a missed opportunity to transform the quality of the public realm, the image of the area and local accessibility, each of which play a key part in facilitating high value economic growth. The contribution that the option 8 scheme makes towards improving the environment along Coburg Street, new east-west connections in the form of a new road to the north of the station and an internal connection in line with Drummond Street through the station concourse, will still not fundamentally meet the EAP aspiration to create an integrated and vibrant piece of city with traditional streets and development around and above the new station.

The level of development supported by the HS2 schemes is not able to be confirmed, but as mentioned above, it is estimated that the option 8 scheme is likely to result in significant reductions in the number of homes and jobs secured. Even where additional over site development can be secured above the existing station (which would be dependent upon Network Rail to deliver) issues with access, design and setting make it unlikely to meet the EAP or baseline scheme capacity potential. The revised scheme also leaves the podium building and 1 Eversholt Street building to the front of the station in place (the baseline B1 VM scheme also retains 1 Eversholt Street), which is a huge lost opportunity to transform the image of Euston, and also restricts development capacity here. Taking a piecemeal approach to development and reliance on several organisations to deliver transformational change is unlikely to fully meet the transformational potential represented by the arrival of HS2 into Euston.

Conclusions

The evaluation of the two HS2 station designs against the EAP objectives and design principles clearly illustrates the significant issues arising from not taking a comprehensive approach to redeveloping the station and failing to address the existing public realm and connectivity issues. The findings of the GVA report also clearly demonstrate that there is a significant risk to realising the economic potential of the area and transforming the image of Euston by taking a less comprehensive approach. It is therefore Camden Council and the Mayor's view that a comprehensive approach, more in line with the baseline (B1) scheme would achieve significantly greater economic and community benefits.

If, despite the results of this assessment, it is decided to progress with the Option 8 scheme, significant work on the design of the Option 8 scheme would be required to reduce its footprint, improve permeability and better integrate it with the surrounding streets and townscape. In particular, a joined up approach to assess the potential for OSD across the station areas is required, which would necessitate the active participation and support of Network Rail, DfT and HS2 to try to make the best of the sub-optimal development potential.

Despite the fact that at short notice the comprehensive approach to station redevelopment has been abandoned by the HS2 project team, Camden, GLA and TfL officers have sought to find a compromise solution that could still deliver key aspirations of the EAP, within the limitations imposed by the retention of the classic tracks. This has included proposals from the EAP team to retain key east west and north south linkages, to deliver over station development and to ensure the edges of the new station have active uses rather than blank frontages (please see appendix 4). Additional commentary on this is provided in this report.