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Context

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2. Context

It is important that the Euston Area Plan is based on an understanding of the characteristics of the area and the challenges and opportunities faced.

Chapter 1 has highlighted some of the challenges created by the HS2 project in the Euston area at a high level. The plan area's location between Camden Town and the more settled residential areas to the north of the borough, and the mixed city uses that make up the Central London area to the south of Euston Road also results in both challenges and opportunities.

These issues and the context are set out in this chapter, in the following sections:

- The London-wide context for the Euston Area Plan;
- The local context;
- A brief assessment of Euston's various character areas; and
- The key issues that are faced in the Plan area, including location specific anticipated impacts on the basis of current assumptions of HS2 which will need to be addressed.

2.1 London Context

A strategically important location and major development opportunity

Euston is located to the north of Euston Road, and forms part of the northern boundary of the Central Activities Zone, as identified in the London Plan (2021). The London Plan identifies Euston as an Opportunity Area reflecting the indicative capacity shown in the EAP 2015. It identifies significant potential for intensification and an opportunity to comprehensively transform Euston and the immediate area into a well designed transport interchange and new residential and business district because it is in a strategically important location for London. As well as providing a major transport interchange at Euston Station, Euston is close to King's Cross and St Pancras International mainline stations.

Euston is in the heart of the Knowledge Quarter, a nationally significant cluster of higher education, medical and specialist medical research institutions around Euston Road and Bloomsbury. This further demonstrates the nationally important role and significant future economic potential of this area. Euston is close to major central London destinations, including:

- Major employers and institutions in the Bloomsbury area such as University College London, one of the world's top universities;
- King's Cross and St Pancras with international rail links, hotels and the British Library;
- Tottenham Court Road, Oxford Circus, West End and mid town commerce hubs and other key West End attractions such as Regent's Park and zoo; and

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- Camden Town, an international tourist destination and creative services hub

The area has excellent public transport links, with National Rail, London Overground and Underground services from Euston Station, along with a number of bus services and additional Underground services from Warren Street, Mornington Crescent and Euston Square. Tottenham Court Road Station will provide an interchange with the new Crossrail route nearby.

A transport hub

The Government's proposals for Euston Station would provide enhanced links for Euston to the rest of the country, increasing its public transport connectivity and its prominence as a major National Rail terminus. A direct connection is proposed to interchange at Old Oak Common Opportunity Area, a location of significant growth in residential and economic uses. The Mayor's Transport Strategy supports the development of a north/south high speed rail link.

In further recognition of the important strategic transport role that Euston plays, proposals for a new regional or metropolitan rail route linking south west London to north east London and beyond, are safeguarded through the Crossrail 2 project. Proposals are subject to funding.

This would further enhance the area's crucial transport hub role, but also necessitate careful consideration and planning to avoid potential disruption to the communities living and working here during construction if Crossrail 2 is progressed. The Mayor of London seeks the provision of Crossrail 2 to deal with the projected additional

underground passenger demand from HS2 users.

HS2

Since the adoption of the EAP in 2015, the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 has authorised construction of the phase 1 of HS2. This includes authorising the construction of a terminus station at Euston to be built alongside the existing Network Rail station. The HS2 Act grants overall (known as “deemed”) planning permission for the construction of the railway (which includes the HS2 station and associated buildings such as vent shafts) but some of the detailed design and construction are subject to further approval by Camden as the local planning authority.

As overall planning permission for the HS2 works has been granted by the approval of the HS2 Act, the Council cannot consider the principle of development as this has already been approved by Parliament but it can consider certain details of development and these are set out in Schedule 17 of the HS2 Act. When HS2 submits detailed plans for approval of a building or structure (a schedule 17 application), there are limited grounds that the Council can consider the plans against. The Council's Local Plan, including the Euston Area Plan and this document, are only relevant to a decision made under the Schedule 17 process if they relate to the grounds that the Council are considering. In the case of a schedule 17 submission for the detailed design of a building or structure, the grounds that the Council can request a reasonable modification relate to:

- The local environment or local amenity;
- Road safety or free flow of traffic; or
- Archaeological or historic interest or nature conservation

Network Rail

Network Rail are considering options to regenerate the existing Euston Station, which provides commuter and long-distance rail services to the north. Work is underway to look at what the best approach would be to ensure the station is refurbished to meet the needs of users and regenerated to contribute towards the provision of new homes and jobs above and around the station.

Comprehensive development

Since the HS2 Act was enacted, which just makes provision for the new HS2 station, and does not include the redevelopment of the existing Network Rail station there have been moves to integrate proposals more carefully.

In 2018, Lendlease were appointed as the Government's Master Development Partner (MDP) to develop a masterplan for the area. In 2019 Government commissioned Oakervee review recognised the complexity of building at Euston and recommended that 'the government should: develop and set out a single plan for the overall Euston project' in order to best recognise social and economic value at Euston.

At the time of writing, there are no confirmed Euston station designs. There is a commitment to joint working by the delivery organisations to try to achieve the best solution for Euston. While this approach is welcomed, it does mean that there is less certainty around station designs, costs and

timescales which means that updates to the Plan must provide enough flexibility for future design development, viability and technical assessment.

Central Government

The government's 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy outlines plans to establish a Euston Delivery Company to lead private investment and development at Euston Station, working with Camden Council and the GLA to grow a commercial and life sciences hub, deliver affordable housing, and support regeneration. The Strategy also highlights the potential for the Delivery Company to bolster Euston Housing Delivery along with the potential for some kind of Development Corporation in the future. At the time of writing the Council is working to explore the potential for a Locally Led Development Corporation at Euston, but this requires new legislation to be laid by Government and would require consultation on its size, powers, governance etc.

The area is therefore a focal point for government activity to both deliver HS2/ station infrastructure and deliver commercial, life sciences and affordable homes which sets the context for the review of the Plan.

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2.2 Local Context

The changing role of Euston

The Euston area is home to a significant resident population, many of whom live within the three housing estates surrounding the station (Regent's Park, Somers Town and Amptill estates). It provides local shopping areas, specialist ethnic shops and restaurants around Drummond Street, as well as accommodating larger scale commercial uses and ground floor shops along the Euston Road Central London Frontage.

The wider area is already undergoing significant growth and change. King's Cross Central has been delivered and has helped to transform derelict railway lands into a vibrant new urban quarter including 1,700 homes and up to 25,000 jobs as well as other mixed uses including community facilities and cultural uses. The bioscience cluster in the area also continues to develop, with the arrival of the Francis Crick Institute in 2015. These nearby changes will have a major impact on the image, feel and investment potential of the Euston area.

Any redevelopment at or around Euston Station would be likely to have significant impacts on local communities, unless properly managed and mitigated. The westward expansion of Euston Station and tracks associated with HS2 has generated a number of substantial impacts on local communities including the loss of homes, business premises, community facilities and open spaces. Further details are provided in Section 2.4 Key issues.

We Make Camden is the Council's corporate strategy. It sets out what the Council wants to collectively achieve and lead together with all those who have a stake in the Borough. It

was developed following conversations with residents, partners and community leaders.

The new Local Plan sets out the Council's vision for future development in Camden for the next 15 years, with planning policies to inform and shape how the borough develops to reflect the six key ambitions set out in We Make Camden. The EAP and the proposed updates include a number of strategic and cross-cutting policies which seek to create the conditions to deliver on a number of our We Make Camden ambitions in the Euston area.

Existing Policy and Guidance

Draft Planning Brief for Euston

In early 2020 we consulted on a draft planning brief which included guidance for development above and around Euston station and the tracks. As there is significant crossover between the draft planning brief and the EAP, a decision was taken to focus efforts on updating the EAP in order to ensure that there is a robust and up to date framework by which to assess development at Euston. Work on the planning brief document is on hold but the production of the draft planning brief and what we have learnt through the consultation process is an important step in developing the planning framework for Euston. Where appropriate, comments received and issues identified through the consultation on the draft planning brief will be explored in the EAP update.

The Council is currently updating its Local Plan. The draft Local Plan includes a policy for the Euston Area (Policy S2), to provide an overarching policy context to support the Euston Area Plan.

Any development proposals coming forward will be assessed by policy and guidance such as:

- Camden Local Plan and Camden Draft New Local Plan (Regulation 19)
- Camden Site Allocations
- Camden Planning Guidance SPD
- The London Plan and appropriate Supplementary Planning Guidance

Other policy and strategy work in the locality will also help to shape change in the wider area:

- To the southwest, the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan has been adopted by Camden Council as a shared vision for the area, coordinating development proposals across a number of significant sites. The boundaries for the EAP and the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan meet on the southern side of Euston Road at the junction with Tottenham Court Road;
- To the east, the Somers Town Community Investment Programme has been developed by Camden Council to address how growth and investment can be best coordinated to deliver maximum benefits for the communities in the Somers Town area over a 15 year period.

A number of projects have been delivered with a rebuilt Edith Neville school, new children's centre, community hub, new residential units and improvements to the public spaces. The Somers Town neighbourhood forum and plan area also cover this area. Somers Town has received funding from the Mayor of London to become a more sustainable neighbourhood through the Future Neighbourhoods 2030 programme. It aims to help residents, local businesses and organisations understand how climate change is affecting us and introduce a number of projects to empower communities to continue on their journey to a more sustainable future.

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2.3 Character Areas

The area covered by the Euston Area Plan is diverse in character. Seven character areas in the Euston area are described below. The specific policies and proposals for each area, which address the plan objectives, are set out in Chapter 4. These policies and proposals are informed by the key issues (see section 2.4) covering the whole area,

and guided by the development strategy in Chapter 3.

The character areas contain a mixture of land ownerships and development proposals in all character areas will be influenced by proposals brought forward by each of these distinct landowners in response to the policies in this Plan.

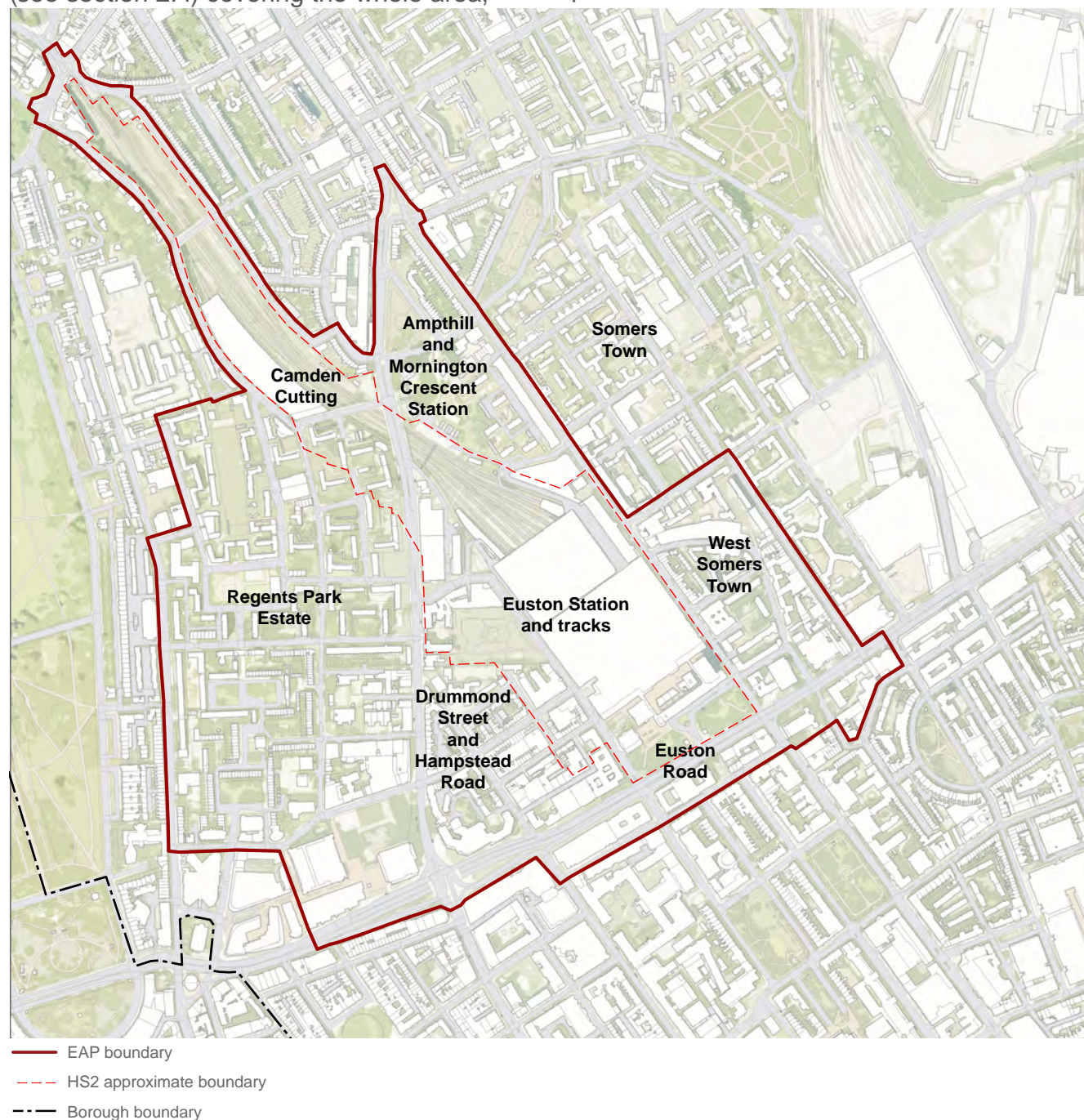


Figure 2.1 Euston's character areas



1. Euston Station and tracks

Euston Station is a major National Rail station, which is used by millions of passengers a year. The Government is currently developing plans to redevelop the station to cater for increasing demand. Euston is a major London Underground station serving the Victoria and Northern lines which are already crowded at rush hours and also a strategic bus interchange location. The current configuration of the station and associated infrastructure create a barrier to pedestrian and cycle movement and serve to separate the surrounding communities. The design of the buildings, bus facilities, community safety issues and associated public realm negatively impact on the local environment and contribute towards a poor perception of the image of Euston and HS2 construction works have further added to this.



2. Euston Road

Euston Road forms part of the Transport for London Road Network, and provides a strategic east-west traffic connection (including a number of bus routes) as the inner ring road and is the boundary route of the Central London Congestion Charge Zone. It is also a key pedestrian and cycle route, although heavy traffic affects the convenience and experience of pedestrian movement. The Euston Road sub area also includes Euston Square Underground station and adjoins Warren Street Underground station. As well as a major travel artery, Euston Road is home to a number of important Knowledge Quarter, commercial and institutional buildings, such as the British Library, University College London (UCL) and UCL Hospital, the Wellcome Trust and Friends House as well as hotels and other uses. Several of these institutional buildings are of grand scale and also listed buildings. Euston Square Gardens itself is a historic protected London Square that provides the setting for Euston Station.

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3. Camden Cutting

Park Village East and Mornington Terrace/ Clarkson Row bound this character area. These streets overlook the historic railway cutting, which includes walls of local heritage value on both sides of the cutting and also the listed piers on Mornington Street Bridge (Grade II). Both streets are characterised by listed residential properties and are respectively within Regent's Park Conservation Area and Camden Town Conservation Area, and therefore provide a sensitive setting to railway lands. The character area also includes the part of Regent's Park Estate required to widen the rail tracks to build HS2.

4. Drummond Street and Hampstead Road

The Drummond Street area has a well-preserved grid of historic regency terraces, containing a mix of residential and commercial uses within a tight-knit historic urban grain.

It has a vibrant, distinctive character, and Drummond Street itself is recognised for its specialist ethnic shops and restaurants. To the north of the Drummond Street area, St James's Gardens was a historic open space that contained the Grade II listed structures that relate to its history as a burial ground and the National Temperance Hospital which has local heritage value. These have now been demolished and form part of the HS2 station construction worksite. The listed structures will be relocated. Hampstead Road forms the western boundary to this sub-area, and provides an important north-south route between Euston Road and Mornington Crescent/ Camden Town and a strategic route between the north of the borough and central London.



5. Regent's Park Estate

As a large post-war council estate, the Regent's Park Estate is primarily residential in character, with supporting community facilities, pockets of green spaces and shops. The estate includes large residential slab blocks of up to eleven storeys, along with by a mix of maisonettes (four storeys) and point blocks. Robert Street provides a main east-west route through the estate, and includes a number of shops along with community facilities. The estate also includes three market squares: Clarence Gardens, Munster Square and Cumberland Market. Cumberland Market Estate is included within the extended Regent's Park Conservation area in recognition of its historic value. This character area includes blocks within Regent's Park Estate which have been and will continue to be negatively impacted by the construction of HS2. A number of blocks have been demolished and replacement housing blocks have been constructed across the estate.



6. Ampthill & Mornington Crescent Station

Ampthill is a Council estate developed in the 1960s, and includes a mix of slab blocks and towers as well as Ampthill Square open space. To the north of Ampthill there is a terrace of Grade II listed residential properties and Greater London House that overlook Harrington Square Gardens, an historic London Square. To the east of Harrington Square, terraced properties face onto the northern end of Eversholt Street.

Mornington Crescent Underground station, a Grade II listed building forms the northern tip of the study area. It marks the beginning of Camden Town and falls within Camden Town Conservation area.

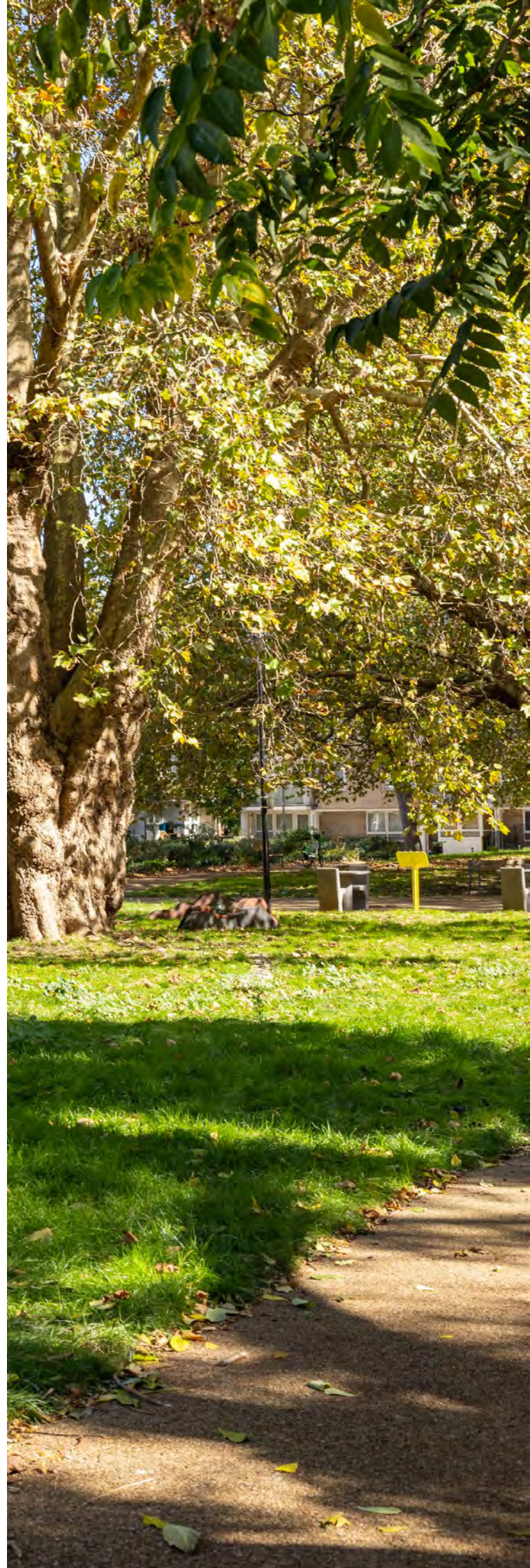
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7. West Somers Town

The Euston Area Plan boundary includes a small section of the Somers Town area. This sub area includes early social housing blocks, as well as Chalton Street and Eversholt Street neighbourhood shopping centres.

Independently of the Euston Area Plan, the London Borough of Camden worked with the local community to develop the Somers Town Community Investment Programme, which sets out proposals for targeted improvements to the Somers Town area and also liaising with the Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum on their aspirations for the area.



2.4 Key Issues

This section summarises some of the key issues for the plan area, and a summary analysis of potential urban design opportunities. A more detailed assessment of the key issues for Euston is provided in the Background Report, which accompanies this Plan, and the specialist technical reports (see list at section 1.4). These, along with the Consultation Reports and the Sustainability Appraisal process provide the context for the

development of the vision, objectives and policies in this Plan.

While the start of the construction works means that there have been some demolitions in the area, (including the Network Rail western boundary) the issues to be addressed remain the same and in some cases have been compounded by construction works in the area.

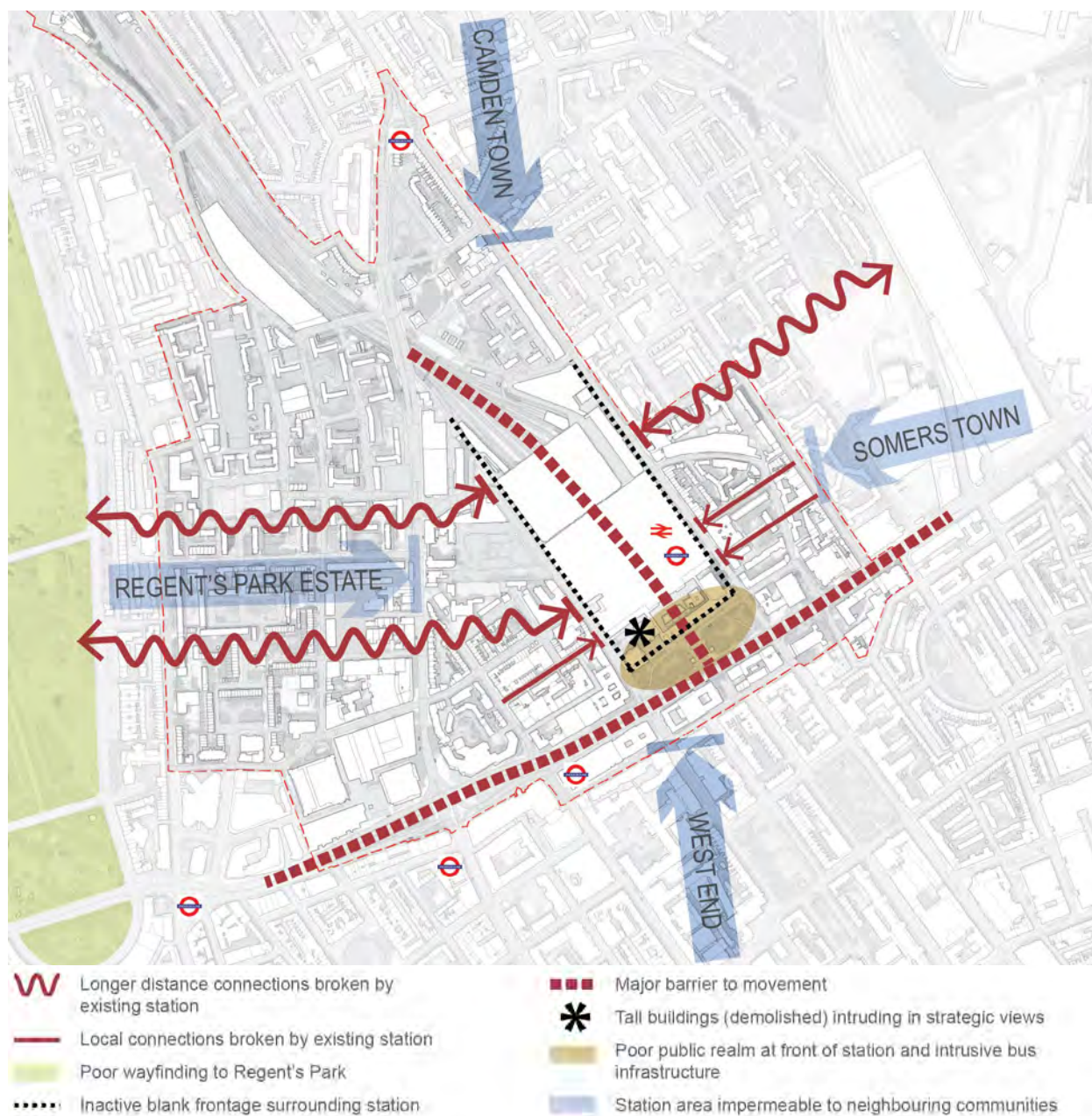


Figure 2.2 Key Issues identified in 2015 EAP

Construction has commenced but issues to be addressed remain the same.

2. CONTEXT

Design

Urban Design

- The current Euston station building and tracks form a barrier between Somers Town and King's Cross to the east and Regent's Park Estate and Park to the west;
- The design of the station and tracks also restrict north-south connectivity;
- Euston Road forms a major barrier to north- south connectivity and effectively severs the area from the West End;
- The existing Euston Station and surrounding public realm is dated and in need of investment. Changes in the level of the piazza, the existing bus station and a lack of clear and convenient routes from the station to Euston Road restrict wayfinding and accessibility and create a poor impression and experience;
- The quality and use of Euston Square Gardens is compromised by the current bus station arrangement, the layout of the gardens and the dominance of Euston Road traffic as well as temporary uses for HS2 construction and the temporary taxi rank;
- There are blank frontages on either side of the station building at Eversholt Street and previously at Cardington Street (before HS2 construction commenced) which contribute towards a poor pedestrian environment here;
- Wayfinding and accessibility around Regent's Park Estate are poor; and
- The area is covered by several protected views in the Mayor's London View Management Framework which limits the scale of new development which some of the current buildings in front of Euston Station intrude. A desire to keep development around Euston to a human scale was highlighted in consultation responses.

Heritage

The study area includes parts of three conservation areas, over 50 listed buildings and features, and five designated London Squares.

- At the southern end of the Euston Area Plan area is the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which includes a cluster of listed buildings around Euston Road, including the Grade I Listed Church of St Pancras, the Grade II* Listed Euston fire station and 1-9 Melton Street as well as a number of Grade II Listed buildings including Friends House and the Wellcome Building. Euston Square Gardens is a designated London Square, and contains a number of listed structures.
- In addition to Euston Square Gardens, the Euston Area Plan area includes Amptill Square, Harrington Square, Clarence Gardens and Munster Square all also London Squares.

- Elsewhere in the Euston Area Plan boundary are parts of the Camden Town Conservation Area (to the north and east) and the Regent's Park Conservation Area (to the west). At the meeting point of these conservation areas, a number of important heritage assets surround the northern part of the Camden Cutting. These include Grade II* listed villas along Park Village East, Grade II listed terraces along Mornington Street, and the Grade II listed Parkway Tunnel and Cutting, which includes a short section of listed retaining wall to the very north of the cutting.
- Other assets of historic significance in the Euston area include the inter-war social housing estates of Somers Town and the fine-grained areas around Drummond Street and Chalton Street. Following HS2 construction commencing, St James's Gardens open space and the National Temperance Hospital site were demolished. These were considered assets of historic significance in the area.
- A number of important heritage assets in close proximity to the Euston area are also noteworthy, in particular Regent's Park, designated Historic Park and Garden, and nationally important Grade I Listed buildings that surround the park. Development would need to consider potential impacts on the setting of these heritage assets.
- Heritage assets in the Euston area make an important contribution to local character, sense of place and identity. The importance of conserving and enhancing heritage in the EAP area was highlighted in community feedback received.

Land Use

Housing

- There is significant need for new housing in Camden, especially for affordable homes. Housing is therefore Camden's priority land use.
- The Euston area has a very high proportion of social housing (and a low proportion of private ownership) compared to the Camden average.
- 215 (mainly affordable) homes have been lost as a result of HS2. Replacement housing blocks have been constructed and are now occupied. Residents on the Regents Park Estate are adversely impacted by the construction works.
- Owing to the properties being deemed virtually uninhabitable as a result of the HS2 works, in 2023, the Council entered into an agreement with HS2 whereby the Council committed to securing vacant possession of Cartmel, Coniston and Langdale blocks in the North area of Regents Park Estate and residents were offered a voluntary decant.
- Consultation responses showed that housing, particularly affordable housing was the most frequently prioritised for accommodation in the EAP area by local communities and organisations such as the Francis Crick Institute and Wellcome Trust and continues to be highlighted as a priority issue.

Economy and employment

- There are significant concentrations of knowledge economy uses around Euston, with a nationally significant cluster of medical and specialist medical research institutions.

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- Bloomsbury is home to a number of Higher Education institutions, including the main campus for University College London.
- Consultation responses generally indicated a lack of support for chain shops and large corporations in favour of support for local businesses and training.
- HS2 has brought a range of impacts on local businesses in the Euston area, including the loss of business premises, and ongoing impacts on remaining businesses and wider investment potential during the prolonged construction process. The HS2 Environmental Statement identifies the significant effects on the economy in the area. HS2 Ltd has worked with Camden Council to develop a comprehensive package of mitigation, compensation and local management measures to prevent or minimise these impacts and Camden continues to ensure that HS2 deliver this mitigation.
- The redevelopment of Euston offers the opportunity to introduce new uses and development to take advantage of the economic potential of Euston's well connected, Central London location.
- A key challenge for new development is to ensure that local people are able to take advantage of any potential future employment opportunities at Euston.

Town centres and retail

- The Euston area includes part of the King's Cross/ Euston Road Central London Frontage as well as Drummond Street, Albany Street/ Robert Street, Chalton Street and Eversholt Street neighbourhood centres.
- The vacancy rate for retail units in the Euston area was 17 percent in 2021, higher than the national average (15 percent), King's Cross (12 percent) and Camden Town (15 percent) but lower than the Holborn Brunswick area (17.8 percent). The percentage of vacant units in 2024 in designated Neighbourhood Centres in Euston are at 5% on Drummond Street and 0% on Chalton Street.
- Over the longer term, the redevelopment of Euston Station, with housing and jobs growth could have significant impacts on the role and vitality of existing retail centres in the Euston area.

Social and community infrastructure

- Deprivation, unemployment, educational attainment and poor health are significant issues for communities to the north of Euston Road.
- The Euston area has a relatively young population and a comparatively high Bangladeshi population.
- There are a range of community facilities and services in and around the study area, including education and health facilities, community centres and libraries, and open spaces.
- Parts of the area experience community safety issues, such as rough sleepers, drug use and street drinking.
- Maria Fidelis Lower School was very close to the proposed HS2 construction works on North Gower Street, it has now been consolidated with the upper school on Phoenix Road with assistance from HS2 and Camden Council.

Transport and Public Realm

- Euston is extremely well connected, with National Rail, London Underground, and bus routes, as well as proximity to key destinations such as Central London, Bloomsbury, the West End and Camden Town.
- Travel choice within the plan area reflects the area's high accessibility to public transport. Of the journeys originating in Euston, half of these (54%) are currently being undertaken by bus (27 per cent), the Underground (16 per cent) or by National Rail (11 per cent). Walking mode share is 39 per cent, vehicles (including taxis) 4 per cent and with cycling at 3 per cent (LTDS, 2019/20, TfL).
- Euston Road, Euston Station and tracks are barriers to north-south and east-west pedestrian movement and create a poor local environment.
- Collisions occur along the entire length of Euston Road with concentrations at junctions and pedestrian crossings. Historically, the collision rate is above average compared to other parts of the TLRN. This is related to the busy nature of the road with high levels of traffic, pedestrians and cyclists.



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- While Euston Station provides an important interchange for rail, Tube and bus modes, there is currently a poor environment for users and pedestrians. The existing bus station arrangement provides important interchange facilities but is poorly designed in terms of the wider public realm and movement, creating an unattractive pedestrian and cycle environment.
- The Euston London Underground station access is within the National Rail station footprint and is the only Underground station on the network without a dedicated access.
- From Euston Station there can be a high level of crowding on the southbound Victoria line and both branches of the southbound Northern line at certain times of the day.
- Taxi ranking is temporarily located in Euston Square Gardens using the HS2 Act powers while the station is under construction.
- Existing transport pressures, general growth in the use of Euston Station and additional passenger numbers associated with HS2 and development will create a need for significant infrastructure enhancements to enable the safe and efficient onward movement of additional passengers.

Environment and Open Space

Environment

- Euston has potential for new energy networks to assist in the delivery of zero carbon developments.
- Surface water flooding is an issue in the area, with particular risks around Euston Station.
- Euston Road experiences significant volumes of traffic and associated problems with air quality and noise as a result of traffic emissions and vehicle noise. The Euston area is now located in the Ultra Low Emission Zone.
- St James' Gardens (which is now part of the HS2 worksite) was a local Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and along with Euston Square Gardens contributed towards the delivery of Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan. Both of these spaces have been lost throughout the construction period.
- Consultation results revealed air pollution and the impact of buses and taxis are an important concern for local people in relation to Euston Road particularly.
- A significant number of mature trees in open spaces and street trees to have been lost as a result of HS2.

Open space

- Due to HS2 St James's Gardens open space as well as all of Hampstead Road open space have been permanently lost.
- Euston Square Gardens is being used to enable HS2 construction works until the opening of the HS2 station.
- The EAP is therefore an important framework to plan for the medium and long term open space reprovion requirements resulting from HS2 construction.
- Consultation consistently highlights that open space and parks are highly valued, throughout the plan area.
- During the passage of the HS2 Bill through Parliament, funding from the Department for Transport was agreed to improve open space and play space to help mitigate the temporary and permanent loss of open spaces. Improvements to a range of existing spaces have been completed, with replacement open space due to be provided as part of the HS2 scheme.

The update to the EAP will include a range of consultation and engagement, with informal engagement with communities. This will build on the consultation and engagement that has taken place on the draft planning brief for the Euston area.

Key issues, consultation and implications for plan objectives

The key issues here have been developed as an iterative process during plan preparation, and many informed the drafting of the initial objectives consulted on in 2012. The results of both stages of the consultation process revealed consistent support for the EAP objectives and minor amendments were made to reflect comments and suggestions received.

Euston



Euston Station



Sainsbury's

CAFFÈ
NERO

Enter the
station, then
take first left

Enter the
station, then
take first left

DISCOVER
EUSTON

DRUMMOND ST
COBOURG ST
STARO ST
EUSTON ST
STEPH



Euston Station

