

Response from London TravelWatch : 6th November 2015

Question 1:

Please let us know your comments on the [Non-technical summary](#).

And Question 2:

Please let us know your comments on [Volume 1: Introduction and methodology](#).

Our previous petition remains our stated position, and the comments in this response should be considered as additional to petition number 0904, available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cmhs2/petitions/0904.pdf>

In general the changes at Euston station, as described in the Non-technical summary, are broadly welcomed, in particular the phasing of the project to allow for greater retention of conventional platforms and approach tracks during the construction period. This will be significantly better than the hybrid bill proposals for passengers, although it must be managed carefully with due regard to the disruption to the highway in particular, with pedestrians, cyclists and bus users suffering longer disruption periods.

None of our objections, as detailed in petition 0904, have been resolved as part of these additional provisions, and must be considered to stand as objections to the hybrid bill. The relevant sections of the petition are repeated below:

The impact of HS2 for London's travelling public will be significant. An estimated 15 million passengers per annum will arrive in London that would otherwise have travelled by air or road. There will also be passengers who will transfer from other rail routes, notably from the East Midlands. This will place a significant extra burden on existing facilities, especially in the Euston area, and on passenger access to connecting transport services.

The effect on passengers of the extra numbers of people using London Underground from Euston or Euston Square, without additional public transport provision, would be injurious in terms of additional crowding and extended journey times, resulting from the additional traffic generated by HS2. Sections of the lines from Euston are already amongst the most congested on the London Underground network¹. Therefore, in considering this Bill, we pray that you will consider requiring the provision of such measures as are necessary to mitigate this risk. In particular we ask that such provisions be made for the Chelsea-Hackney (Crossrail 2) safeguarded route to be altered to include a Crossrail 2 station at Euston.

Euston station layout and facilities

At Euston itself, as shown in Schedule 1, Works Nos. 1/1 to 1/5 inclusive, the layout and design of the new station will be critical to the success or otherwise of HS2. It is imperative that the needs of passengers, including those with disabilities, are given priority. The current layout of Euston station includes many levels, with significant numbers of steps, which are a barrier to use by people with temporary or permanent mobility impairments, as well as an extra obstacle for those travelling with luggage or

¹ Greater London Authority, Too Close for Comfort 2010

young children. The redevelopment of Euston station provides a unique opportunity to change this for the better. With the extra passenger numbers expected, it will be of fundamental importance to get this right.

Our research² has confirmed the importance passengers place on the layout and usability of stations, and as such the design of Euston station will be a determinant of the success or failure of HS2 in the eyes of the public.

The ease with which pedestrians can walk to, from or around Euston station is important both to passengers and the local community as large railway terminals can both be valuable assets for a community or a significant barrier to movement and blight a community. The redevelopment of Euston station has the potential to significantly improve the environs of Somers Town, and the provision of a level walking route from each compass point of the station, with access to the station from each corner of the station, along with walking routes through the station, is imperative. It is important that all walking routes included in the design of the station are level, without steps.

The interchange options from HS2 at Euston, whether to another rail service, the Underground stations at Euston or Euston Square, bus, taxi, cycling, the walking route to St Pancras and King's Cross or the new Crossrail 2 service should all be as seamless as possible. Again, level walking routes without steps are a critical factor supported strongly by our research³. In particular the interchange from Euston National Rail/HS2 station to Euston Square Underground station should form a continuous link away from street level, such that the passenger is not aware that they are separate stations. Similarly, the projected Crossrail 2 station at Euston could allow construction of a below ground walking route between Euston and King's Cross/St. Pancras stations that avoids crossing busy roads for passengers with children and/or heavy luggage.

The interchange with the bus station at the front of the national rail station should be significantly improved. The re-design of the interchange to allow passengers to board a bus in any direction without crossing carriageways or navigating steps will be a key factor to the attractiveness of this interchange for all users, particularly those with sensory or mobility impairments, or those with heavy luggage or young children. It will reduce risk to pedestrians and assist with the dispersal of passengers using HS2.

Question 3:

Please let us know your comments on [Volume 2: Community Forum Area \(CFA\) reports and map books](#)

CFA 1 Euston – Station and Approach

Section 3.3.2 makes clear that there will be no obligation for Network Rail to complete any works on the conventional station concourse, or integrate their station with either the HS platforms or the wider community. This would not be acceptable, as a unified station with step-free access from/to each of the HS2 platforms,

² London TravelWatch, The London Travelling Environment: what consumers think 2013

³ London TravelWatch, Value for Money on London's transport services: what consumers think 2013

conventional station platforms and interchanges such as bus, underground or footway, is required as the minimum standard at Euston. The onward journey from Euston station itself, whether by foot or any other mode, will be an important part of the overall journey experience and the interchange quality will be critical. Detailed plans for the redevelopment of the entire Euston station should be developed as a minimum requirement of the HS2 design works. London TravelWatch has researched and developed a standard for interchanges that should be applied to this development at Euston. It is available at http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=4040&field=file . This requirement for quality at interchanges is underlined by the HS2 passenger panel findings conducted by Transport Focus.

The onward dispersal of passengers from Euston HS2 station will be shared among many modes. Local passengers for the area near Euston station will likely use either the footway or local buses, and the permeability of the station and its integration with the local area must be both comprehensive and to a high standard. The interchange with the bus station must be at the same level without steps causing an encumbrance, and clearly signed. Passengers who are not seeking to stay in the Euston area will use a combination of other National Rail services, the London Underground network, buses and taxis. The interchange with each of these modes must be as seamless as possible, both with the distance being kept as short as possible, clear signage, and wherever possible at the same level. Where a difference of level is unavoidable, such as with the London Underground stations at Euston and Euston Square, step free access to all interchange points must be provided. The current proposals do not include either a same level interchange with National Rail services, or a reasonable distance between the HS2 platforms and taxis.

The dive-under and reinstatement of Line X should include the retention of six tracks rather than five in the post-construction plan, which we believe to be possible. The impact on service at London Bridge from the loss of a single approach track, during the construction of the Thameslink works there gives evidence that this is a critical factor in service resilience and its impact on passengers. London TravelWatch reported on this deterioration through its quarterly performance reports and to its board⁴. With the number of retained conventional platforms being described as a "minimum of 11", we had previously believed this was going to be 13, and would like this to be confirmed. As it stands the level of impact on existing passengers throughout the construction period would be unacceptable without further mitigation. We are also skeptical of the assumption in paragraph 15.4.27 that over 50% of passengers displaced from the withdrawn Watford Junction to Euston shuttle services would decamp to the Metropolitan line, assuming that the Croxley link, is completed. We think instead that passengers will simply crowd on to other services from the same stations, rather than transfer, because even with the Croxley link journey times via this route will be much more extended than via the direct route into Euston.

⁴ http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=3998&age=&field=file .
http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=4006&age=&field=file
http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=4010&age=&field=file
http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=4012&age=&field=file
http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/get_lob?id=4007&age=&field=file

We are also concerned that the length of the proposed closures of London Underground platforms at Euston without further mitigation measures would produce unacceptable levels crowding at other stations in central London, particularly at Warren Street and Camden Town. We also feel that the description in paragraph 15.4.32 of where displaced passengers from the closure of Northern Line southbound Bank branch platform, would be displaced to is unrealistic, in that we do not think that passengers will circulate via Kennington on the Northern Line Charing Cross branch. Instead a more likely scenario is that passengers will change at other Northern Line Charing Cross branch stations, such as Tottenham Court Road, Charing Cross, Embankment and Waterloo, and then via other London Underground lines, Crossrail or National Rail routes.

Similarly, in paragraph 15.4.88 reference is made to a C19 (westbound) bus route. No such route exists, so we wonder which route is being referred to here.

The effect on bus services of construction and construction traffic is of concern to us and we would recommend that additional mitigation measures to reduce the impact on bus passengers are taken. In particular, measures to keep journey times consistent with that operating now or better than now need to be in place throughout the construction period.

Question 4:

Please let us know your comments on [Volume 3: Route-wide effects](#)

We have no comments on this section

Question 5:

Please let us know your comments on [Volume 5: Technical appendices and map books](#).

The design for Euston station, and the approach tracks to the station, will be critical for passengers both on the High Speed and conventional networks. The design for the redevelopment of the conventional station must be undertaken as part of the same design as the HS2 station works, to avoid the issues highlighted in our petition. The new combined station must be free from barriers to movement between the HS and conventional parts of the station, with the concourse at the same level as both parts of the station and the surrounding environment, including bus station and footways, and step-free access to all modes including all London Underground platforms.

We would suggest that as much spoil be removed from the site by rail as is possible, especially at night. The impact of the current plans to remove much of the spoil by road, to a quantity of up to 800 lorry movements per day for many years, would be significant on both the local community and the Transport for London Road Network. This would likely lead to significant disruption and delays to bus passengers, as well as taxi passengers and pedestrians seeking to cross the highway.

With some lorry movements inevitable, with an associated drop in reliability and performance of the bus network, some passengers will seek to use the London Underground network as an alternative to the bus. We understand that there are

lengthy run-throughs of Euston station proposed as part of these works, these should be limited to as short a duration as possible, and wherever possible at a time when there is sufficient ability of the bus network to accommodate the extra passengers that will be forced to use alternative routes. There also needs to be a comprehensive communications plan and campaign that allows passengers to make informed choices regarding their journeys. To this end we recommend that this is dealt with by the London wide Travel Demand Management Board, established since the 2012 Olympics, and which has been applied to the Thameslink programme subsequently.

The approach tracks should be retained to the same quantity as today, recent experience at London Bridge has proven the importance to service recovery that the approach tracks have at London termini, and we would urge a reconsideration of the proposal to retain 5 tracks, instead of the 6 there are today, as we have been informed that this is possible.

There is a welcome improvement in permeability, but this still misses the east-west linkages, particularly from Euston to the North-East of the station. Combined with the missing Network Rail elements to a workable station, this must be included as part of the planning for the combined Euston station.

We encourage close working between HS2, Network Rail, London Borough of Camden and London TravelWatch to develop the plans for Euston satisfactorily.