



Department
for Transport

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From the Secretary of State
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Chris Hayward

Thank you for letters of 15 July and 27 June regarding Camden Council's position on HS2.

The Government remains committed to delivering HS2 which will provide vital capacity for rail passengers and our transport system and a once in a lifetime opportunity to rebalance our country's economy.

As we near the start of the construction, I appreciate that some of your residents still have concerns and HS2 Ltd will continue to work with you to try and address these. I understand that the London Borough of Camden were provided with a significant number of assurances by the Department in response to your petition to the Commons Select Committee. These assurances look to provide your residents with additional mitigation and community benefits and I hope these will have already gone a long way to address many of their concerns.

As part of these assurances there was an agreement to create the Euston Station Strategic Redevelopment Board (ESSRB), which will have a strong leadership and oversight role in the development of Euston Station, including developing strategy and masterplanning, and ensuring the integration of all infrastructure projects at Euston station. I understand that the Board has met three times now, and all the partners on the Board are working well together to progress the agreed objectives.

This is alongside the commitment to provide Network Rail with funding in relation to initial feasibility work for the redevelopment of the 'classic' Euston station.

As you know, HS2 Ltd officials have already written to the London Borough of Camden and the other members of the Euston Integrated Programme Board with the outcome of a number of additional studies they agreed to undertake. With respect to the 'material by rail' study to explore options to reduce the number of lorry movements around Euston, I have considered the report produced by the collaborative working groups and have asked David Prout to write to ESSRB members setting out my proposed next steps. You should have received this letter.

With respect to the points you raise in your letter of 27 June regarding community engagement, HS2 Ltd fully accepts that it has responsibility to ensure that it builds good relationships with communities. We need to ensure that we understand the concerns and impacts on communities affected by the construction of HS2 and, where possible, identify ways in which these can be mitigated.

Effective engagement with the individuals and communities affected by the construction of HS2 will be critical in understanding local concerns. In line with the recommendations of the Bynoe Report, HS2 Ltd is recruiting a Director of Community Engagement whose key task will be to implement the HS2 Community Engagement Strategy. HS2 Ltd has trebled its community engagement teams along the line of route from seven to over 20 members of staff. In Euston there are now three full time members of staff to reflect the challenge, scale and complexity of the programme. In addition, HS2 Ltd is planning to recruit a Senior Engagement Manager dedicated to Euston and Camden, so as HS2 moves toward construction, it is better resourced to undertake engagement.

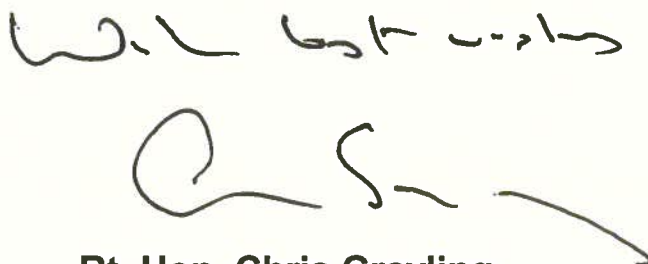
The 'HS2 in Euston' drop in facility that was opened earlier this year to enable residents to find out more about HS2 plans in Euston has already received hundreds of visits from local residents. So far eight information events have been held at the centre (on materials by rail, air quality, National Temperance Hospital demolition, and noise insulation).

HS2 Ltd has advised me that, in line with assurances given to the London Borough of Camden, the development of a Community Engagement Framework has now been largely agreed with your officers. This framework proposes deployment through a combination of channels to ensure engagement is as wide reaching and effective as possible, including newsletters, on-line engagement, information sessions and a community outreach programme. This will allow more people from the community to find out more about plans for HS2 in Camden. It will also provide the opportunity for the community to meet the experts and have a conversation about what is proposed. I understand that Simon Kirby has recently held meetings with community representatives to discuss HS2 plans for engagement and once

the new HS2 Director of Community Engagement is appointed, you will have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts on this important issue with them.

I also note that you regularly meet with David Prout, Sir David Higgins and Simon Kirby and encourage you to continue this dialogue.

I look forward to working with you to ensure we deliver HS2 on time, on budget and in a manner that is respectful of the people that will be affected during construction.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Grayling', written in a cursive style.

Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT

