

HS2 compensation for Camden 'not enough'

A London council affected by plans to build the HS2 high-speed rail link from Birmingham to Euston has said the national compensation pot will mean its residents' needs may not be met.

The government has proposed putting aside up to £1.3bn to reimburse people living close to High Speed Two.

But Camden Council says the bill for its borough alone will be £1bn.

The Department for Transport has said its compensation will be "significantly beyond statutory requirements".

The total compensation package for the project is expected to be between £930m and £1.3bn, but that figure is subject to property compensation proposals which High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd is consulting on.

'Compensation not factored'

A consultation event will be held in Camden on Saturday by HS2 Ltd which is undertaking the engineering, design and environmental work for the Department for Transport (DfT).

It is one of 22 being held over three months nationally.

To implement HS2, Euston Station in the borough of Camden will need to be expanded as the service's London terminal.

The expansion will mean the demolition of about 216 homes, the loss of businesses, including some in Drummond Street which is renowned for its South Asian cuisine, and the relocation of Maria Fidelis secondary school.

The government says the rail network will provide direct, high capacity, high speed links between London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester.

But Camden Council says it will have to bear the brunt of the disruption and relocations.

Sarah Hayward, leader of the Labour-run council, said: "We don't believe the government has allocated enough money and we don't believe they're taking Camden's concerns seriously."

The council argues that people in urban areas will not be compensated in the same way as those in rural areas.

A spokesman said: "These people are expected to live through 10 years of building work and that's where we're asking for compensation that they haven't factored in."

The government has said it will go "above and beyond what is required by law" and compensation measures being consulted on include a hardship scheme to help those who need to move but are unable to sell their homes.

An HS2 Ltd spokeswoman for Euston said it would create "enormous opportunities for London and the Euston area" and support the creation of 20,000 jobs for Londoners.

HS2 will be built in two phases.

Phase one of the £33bn high-speed rail link is due to start operating in 2026.

Construction could begin in 2017.

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