



EALING MATTERS NEWSLETTER

19 April 2018

ISSUE 1

Welcome to the first newsletter published by Ealing Matters. We are a network of residents' groups throughout Ealing who are attempting to maintain and enhance quality of life for Ealing residents. Our formation over the winter of 2017/18 was in response to a wave of residents' dissatisfaction about occurring and planned changes to the fabric of Ealing.

We currently have a steering group of five local residents.

Let's begin with a round-up of some of the changes taking place throughout Ealing:

ACTON

A group of local stakeholders is attempting to take over the management of Acton Old Library. This is the second such attempt. They first tried in 2014 but the London Borough of Ealing (LBE) chose Curzon Cinema's bid instead. Curzon did nothing for three years and then in 2017 pulled out of the project.

In North Acton seven tower blocks exceeding 24 storeys each in North Acton are in various stages of the planning process. One of the developments of three tower blocks, one 25 storeys high, at the Perfume Factory site was both approved and then rejected within minutes at a farcical LBE Planning Committee meeting held on 21 February 2018. The Chair of the committee miscounted the original show of hands. A heavily criticised local resident spotted this, called 'foul' and at the recount the prior approval was overturned.

333 new homes are planned at the Homebase/Argos site on the corner of Western Avenue and Old Oak Common Lane. There will be three blocks, with one rising to 16 storeys. 598 cycle racks will be available for the 1,000 or so residents – but no car parking spaces. With the apparent glut of unsold new flats in Ealing, it will be interesting to watch how quickly Barratt London begins demolition and construction.

EALING CENTRE

The cinema site project has slipped yet another year to 2020 before we can expect a new cinema. What is now primarily a residential development may be delayed even further because of the over supply and recent drop in sales of new flats (see below).

LBE is trying to hand over Victoria Hall and Queens Hall to its chosen Ealing Town Hall hotel creator Mastcraft. Getting in the way of this is the fact that Victoria and Queens Hall are held

within a Victorian Charitable Trust for community use. The Trust has been mal-administered by LBE for decades. Any hall letting fees should have been exclusively used for maintenance of the halls – and that clearly has not been the case. This could finish up in the Courts. See www.saveealingscentre.com for more details.

We still have planning blight across the road from Ealing Broadway Station (the eastern end of the ‘Arcadia’ development which was turned down by the Government in December 2009). British Land who bought the site in November 2017 is still apparently considering its options.

Plans are underway to replace LBE’s Perceval House with 470 flats. Also on this three acre site will be a new LBE Central Library and a new LBE customer centre. Both these facilities will be small. 70% of the Central Library books will disappear from the shelves when the library is moved to a new much smaller site within Ealing Broadway Centre in June 2018. All human face-to-face contact has already been eliminated in the current LBE customer centre in Perceval House – so a new centre with some free phones and online access terminals will require very little space. There are some concerns about the developer Galliford Try, whose share price fell considerably recently.

GREENFORD

1,950 new homes are to be built on the adjacent former GSK and Sunblest Bakery sites at Greenford Green. 1,376 of the homes will be available for rent from Greystar. Greystar is a 25-year-old American company describing itself as ‘a global rental housing leader’. Although the site measures over 20 acres no new houses will be built there. In fact 1,950 flats will be constructed in seven residential blocks rising to a height of 19 storeys. There are also plans for a new primary school, shops, restaurants, gyms and offices. An NHS community, day care ‘hub’ is also envisioned, but the funding for this is as yet not in place. In 2017 the development completion date was set at 2023. Currently all that is visible are piles of rubble and demolition vehicles.

GUNNERSBURY PARK

This 76-acre park, dating back to the 11th century is the biggest park in Ealing. It is jointly managed by LBE and the London Borough of Hounslow (LBH), but the latter is the relevant planning authority. Grant funded renovation of the 17th century main mansion, boating lake and the Orangery are well underway. New tennis courts have been built, as has a new café which is now open. A new indoor sports centre will also be constructed.

Local residents are concerned that none of them have been asked to join the Board of the Gunnersbury Estate (2026) Community Interest Company (CIC) which now manages the park. The CIC is jointly owned by LBE/LBH. Three large open air entertainments are scheduled to take place in the park very soon and local residents are concerned about how they will be managed and the impact they will have on the park and on local residents. More at www.visitgunnersbury.org

HANWELL

The so called ‘Marshall Building’ Uxbridge Road development of 57 flats rising up to nine storeys next door to the Lidl supermarket in central Hanwell was rejected on 21 March 2018 by the LBE Planning Committee. No doubt the developer will be back again with an appeal or a modified proposal. Plans are also ongoing to build 43 homes, mostly in a seven storey block, on

the old Peugeot garage site, again in Hanwell centre on the Uxbridge Road, and 284 flats on the Wickes/Nissan site in Boston Road.

How these plans for 384 flats in central Hanwell ‘conform’ to the LBE 2012 Local Plan - which envisaged ‘enhancing and consolidating Hanwell centre’ with 109 mixed tenure homes to be built by 2026 - is quite unfathomable.

NORTHOLT

Rectory Park is the site of a major sports development with two, new, floodlit artificial football pitches, a pavilion, two community rooms and changing facilities. The park will also become the new HQ of the Middlesex Football Association. Work continues on the re-development of the Rectory Park residential estate. There will be a net gain of 155 homes with 425 new homes completed by 2020.

PERIVALE

Residents, Councillors and MP Steve Pound are up in arms about a number of houses in Wyresdale Crescent and Ribchester Avenue which are each being converted into six flats. Research revealed that the houses are being purchased by a couple of overseas operators. Individual applications were being approved by LBE to convert traditional 1930s family homes into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Once brought to the attention of Council Planning Officers they have supported Steve Pound in his attempts to change planning guidance on this issue. Steve had a debate in Parliament on this topic on 21 March 2018, however the relevant Minister bounced the issue back to Local Authorities to deal with.

SOUTHALL

The latest legal attempt to stop LBE ‘gifting’ Warren Farm to Queens Park Rangers football club has seemingly failed. Only an appeal to the Supreme Court is left to the campaigners. The Government blessing of 61 acres of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) being ‘gifted’ to a professional sports club suggests that MOL/Green Belt land is up for grabs for anyone to acquire for possibly any sort of use.

A private religious group has been given the go-ahead to acquire a 250-year lease from LBE for Southall Town Hall. The campaign group Save Southall Town Hall has been granted a judicial review of the process by which the religious group ‘won’ the bidding

WEST EALING

LBE has won an £6.5 million ‘Liveable Neighbourhoods’ (LV) grant from TfL to improve pedestrian, cycling and public transport services in central West Ealing. A local stakeholder group has been formed to pursue these plans.

On 3 May 2018, as part of the Local Elections, Ealing residents who live in the West Ealing Centre Neighbourhood Area will be asked to vote in a referendum on the West Ealing Centre Neighbourhood Plan. View the plan at www.wecnf.org

The new West London Islamic Centre mosque construction on the corner of Brownlow Road/Singapore Road has reached the 3rd floor of the five-storey building. This phase was to be completed by May 2018 to accommodate 3,000 worshippers on the ground floor – but meeting this timescale looks improbable. Next door, the Thames Valley Housing Association residential

block proceeds slowly. 136 flats are being built with no car parking places, but 270 bike racks for residents.

There are some other changes which are impacting, and will in future impact, all areas of Ealing:

LOCAL ELECTIONS 3 MAY 2018

If you attend election hustings make sure to ask the Councillor candidates what they intend to do to improve your quality of life.

CROSSRAIL/ELIZABETH LINE

It's emerging that there are no plans for private car drop-off and pick-up places outside the front of the new Ealing Broadway Crossrail/Elizabeth Line Station. At the West Ealing Crossrail/Elizabeth Line Station the opportunity has also been missed to put private car drop-off and pick-up places directly outside the station entrance.

OVERSUPPLY OF NEW FLATS IN EALING

'Ealing Today' recently reported that only two new build homes were sold in central Ealing (W5 postal district) during November/December 2017 and January 2018. In the year to October 2017, there were 2,678 home sales transactions throughout Ealing. In the year to October 2007, there were 6,581 home sales transactions. Some large UK house builders have recently suffered big drops in their share prices – including Galliford Try (27%) and Barratt Developments (18.2%).

THE NEW DRAFT LONDON PLAN

Ealing Matters has responded to the consultation. We are unhappy that Ealing Council has seemingly agreed to the Mayor's requirement that 28,000 new homes are built in Ealing from 2019 to 2028. We have submitted a range of comments and objections and these can be viewed on our Facebook site.

EALING MATTERS

We need to hear from residents, residents' groups and community groups with your concerns about how, why, when and where changes are happening across the 21 square miles of Ealing. Please get in touch and keep in touch.

Regards,
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