

SEC 2 summary

Public Inquiry into the called in planning application for :

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 7 buildings Block A North - 2/6/7 storeys, A South - 1/2/4/6/8 storey with basement, B 2/5/7/8 storey, C - 3/5/11 storey, D - 2/3/9/10/11/12 storey, E 2/3/9/10/11/12 storey and F 19/25/26 storeys containing approximately 17,279 square metres of retail shops (Use Class A1), 1,363 square metres of cafes/restaurants (A3), 490 square metres of offices (B1(a)), 1,861 square metres of leisure facilities (D2) and 567 residential units, provision of 2 basement floors containing 352 car parking spaces (of which 230 are for the residential element including 16 spaces for the car club and 60 disabled spaces and 122 are for the retail and commercial uses including 7 disabled spaces), parking for 631 cycles (567 for the residential use and 64 for the retail and commercial uses), servicing area and plant and equipment with vehicular access off Springbridge Road, pedestrian accesses off Springbridge Road, Haven Green and The Broadway, landscaping, formation of areas of public realm, amenity space for the residential uses and ancillary works : Arcadia Centre (all), 9 - 29 (consecutive) and 36 - 42 (consecutive) The Broadway 1 - 10 (consecutive) Central Chambers 1 - 4 (consecutive) Haven Place Flower Haven Springbridge Road, land over the Railway between Springbridge Road and Central Chambers and car park adjacent to Haven Green. EALING

Summary of witness statement on TRANSPORT & ACCESS

by
TONY MILLER

BA, FIPD
on behalf of
SAVE EALING CENTRE (SEC)

Planning Inspectorate reference :

APP/A5270/V/09/2097739

London Borough of Ealing reference :

P/2007/4246

1. My name is Tony Miller and I am giving evidence on behalf of Save Ealing's Centre on the subject of transport and access
2. This application will have major impacts on vehicle traffic in the centre of Ealing. The town centre's roads are already congested, with heavy traffic frequently blocking the A4020, the main east-west through route of The Broadway/Uxbridge Road, and also the northbound Springbridge road adjacent to the site. The plan has to be seen in the context of traffic growth of recent years and the cumulative impact of the parallel application for the development of the neighbouring Dickens Yard site. Together these two applications would add more than 1,250 apartments, nearly 28,000 square metres of shops and cafés and 2,500 people into an already busy area.
3. **Impact of traffic increases.** The proposal would create major issues round the site, for parking, internal movements within the site both for vehicles and mobility impaired pedestrians, and would impose serious restrictions on the future improvements to transport in Ealing town centre.
4. Extra traffic would be such that the scheme would substantially breach the objectives of the UDP and the London plan to restrain growth to zero from the 2001 base line. The applicants' own Transport Assessment acknowledges that there would be significant peak hour traffic increases, particularly on the southern section of Springbridge Road and at the junction with the Broadway. This will come from passenger cars, buses and HGVs.
5. Despite this, we believe the Transport Assessment has significantly underestimated the potential growth in traffic even without the development, particularly with regard to the increasing numbers of passengers who will be expected through Ealing Broadway station with the opening of Crossrail. The bulk of this additional traffic will probably be carried on buses, for which the present interchange arrangements with Ealing Broadway are already inadequate.

6. We are particularly concerned about the impact of increased traffic on Springbridge Road. The proposed access point to the underground car park has a number of serious shortcomings. These include vehicles manoeuvring at street level, with no holding area or segregation of HGV and private car traffic. Other issues with the entrance to the car park include the vehicle ramp gradient, the need for entering and exiting vehicles to cross one another's paths, with inevitable additional risks to pedestrians, and the fact that the new main pedestrian route to cross the site will end immediately adjacent to the vehicle ramp. This entrance will also be directly opposite the entrance to Christchurch primary school. In an area already suffering from high air pollution, this is the worst possible place to be adding more heavy vehicle movements.

7. The application will inevitably necessitate some consequential changes to the local road network which would require a S.278 agreement. However it contains no new road layout details, and even where these are mentioned (as with the revised crossing between the site and Ealing Broadway station), no draft agreement have been produced, which makes it impossible to assess whether the changes are either practical or likely to be effective. In this as in other respects, the plan is unacceptably silent on how it will fit within the broader objectives of Ealing's transport strategy, as with the requirement to improve links to the station.

8. **Car ownership and residential parking.** The assessments of the likely level of private car ownership for the occupiers of the new apartments are flawed and the provision of parking spaces under-estimates the probable demand, particularly when compared to the Dickens Yard calculations. Any significant extra parking demand will undermine UDP policy objectives for reducing pressure on the local road network, as residents will seek alternative places in the neighbouring area to house their vehicles. The S.106 obligations will not mitigate this impact, and the success of travel plan and other conditions will be difficult if not impossible to monitor.

9. **Retail parking.** No justification has been produced for the proposed level of public car parking spaces for commercial including shoppers' use. The original ratios in the UDP have been ignored and apparently replaced by less stringent measures, although these not having been through the required level of public consultation. Despite requests from TfL, no survey has been completed across the town centre to assess the balance of supply against likely demand. Other measures within the Council's own strategy for reducing traffic flows through the centre and optimising the use of existing public car parks, notably the Springbridge MSCP, have been overlooked.

10. **Basement delivery and parking.** The provisions in the proposed basement vehicle parks are significantly sub-standard and fail to meet UDP policies. Deficiencies noted by officers have not been adequately addressed, with cramped space and internal movements creating potential hazards. The problems include failure to segregate vehicles by type (with particular potential problems for cyclists), routing conflicts below ground with entering and leaving paths crossing, and under-provision for domestic delivery services. As with other provision on the site, the space available is insufficient to allow for the likely quantum of demand from both the number of residents and the volume of commercial and retail uses.

11. **Access and Circulation** The application does not meet the requirements of the UDP in several respects. It fails to achieve the objectives of the SPG for the site and the transport strategy to link with redevelopment of the station, nor does it improve pedestrian access across the busy southbound road. Disability access is poor in many places, both in the public realm and within the housing blocks. Facilities for service access to the commercial premises fronting Haven Green is unclear, but cannot be made direct from the basement level because of the bridging of the railway. There is no safe access for cyclists to the parking area without conflicting with pedestrian movement.

12. **Wider transport planning** A major contribution to successful regeneration of the town centre would be achievement of the plan objective for a public transport

interchange with Ealing Broadway station, in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the SPGs for the two sites. If the Arcadia development is allowed to go ahead on space which is one of the only two options for a new bus station not on existing public roads and open space, it will reduce the chance of an economically acceptable solution and should, if permitted, require an appropriate contribution to pay for the difference between this and the more costly option.

13. The application to bridge the rail tracks should also be refused as being in contravention of the London Plan requirement to safeguard transport land for future potential infrastructure development. There is no evidence that the applicant has properly enquired into the implications of permanently removing the chance of providing extra tracks on the Great Western route, whether for main line or local services.

14. **Conclusion** Most of the transport problems which arise from this plan are due to the applicant's wish to build the maximum possible number of housing units, which requires the bridging of the railway and a high level of densification of the site. This coupled with the increase in retail space will lead to pressures which the local road network cannot accommodate, and which will inhibit planned measures to improve the transport infrastructure. Consequently a large number of approved transport planning policies in the UDP and London Plan would be breached, which on a balanced view should lead to rejection of the application as it now stands.