



Save Ealing's Centre

Dear SEC Supporter

Welcome to SEC's late summer newsletter. You will know we are witnessing some huge changes in the town centre. There are plenty more in store.

A new direction for SEC. We start this time by announcing a change in the focus of SEC itself. SEC was formed in 2007 to respond to Glenkerrin's overblown plans for the Arcadia site and St George's for Dickens Yard. SEC has continued since as an umbrella group for residents' associations and other local groups wanting to get their voice heard in what has proved to be the wholesale redevelopment (we avoid the weasel term 'Regeneration') of the town centre. We have had some big successes – especially in overturning the Council's approval of Glenkerrin's plans and for an improved design for Ealing Broadway station.

Recently we have discussed how to maximise the impact of SEC and the groups who support it. Much has changed since 2008. Crossrail and Londonwide housing targets are attracting outside developers keen to make some easy money. National policies and local cuts have hollowed out good planning and led councils to pursue narrow economic goals. Working with LBE is difficult. Many councillors seem unwilling to take an independent view for fear of losing their place on Committees. They seem instead to take instructions from officers who are much closer to developers than local people. Government's promotion of localism is trickling down to Ealing at a glacial rate.

Across the borough, groups voice similar concerns about developments near them. Campaigns are springing up everywhere, unleashing great energy and new ideas as what to do. But most main Ealing centre sites have had their fate decided. While those of us active in SEC have learned much about planning and campaigning SEC's narrow geographic focus precludes us from responding to boroughwide problems. We may support such campaigns individually but it is time for SEC to concentrate its activities on two areas.

- ♦ **Information dissemination.** SEC will focus on building its supporter database and informing supporters about developments and relevant campaigns through email alerts and newsletters.
- ♦ **Ad-hoc campaigning.** SEC will stay in being to respond to major new Town Centre developments.

SEC will also continue to back the Central Ealing Neighbourhood Forum (CENF) as a place for all sections of Ealing society – the Council, landowners, developers, traders, local groups and local people – to come up with a shared vision and neighbourhood plan and more inclusive policy making. [You can get involved here.](#)

Other News

1. **9-42 The Broadway (the Arcadia site).** The anticipated [planning application](#) - P/2015/3479 - for the remainder of the huge Glenkerrin site has been lodged and you can still comment on it. The best summary is amongst all the files is in the [Design-Access Statement](#). As expected, Benson Elliot (BE) and their partners, Londonewcastle, plan to demolish the entire site - everything including WH Smith, Sainsburys and Carphone Warehouse. In its place will be 191 homes and new shops centred around a new pedestrian route, running from the station to Uxbridge Road opposite the Ealing Broadway centre. Separate blocks will rise in height along Uxbridge Road away from 1-8 the Broadway and a residential tower will be set back beside the railway. Shop servicing will be off the existing Springbridge Road entrance with residents' parking off Station Broadway and provision is made for a club facilities to replace the historic Ealing Blues club and there is an option of a small cinema.
SEC has submitted its formal comments. We acknowledge this is an improvement on the Glenkerrin scheme that was overturned by the Government after a three week public inquiry. However SEC remains opposed to

the loss of the remaining locally listed buildings on Uxbridge Road, and we think the 18 storey residential tower will have an undue impact on Haven Green. While applauding the new club facilities we think there is too much residential accommodation on this very central location. Additional town centre uses should be provided instead. Historic England (previously English Heritage) has also objected strongly to the plans. You can see their objections and our submission via our website at <http://www.saveealingscentre.com/>

2. **Haven Green.** [Friends of Haven Green](#) continue to call for more recognition to be given to the Common land status of Haven Green in its role as an historic area of green space the entire Ealing community enjoys. In spring two separate planning inspectors found against the Council's serial encroachments onto the Common land. FoHG has now made an application to the County Court seeking the removal of developments that are unlawful.
Meantime, the Council is embarking on changes to the highway. These will move the carriageway on the diagonal road a few metres to the north over the footpath that was on the north side of the road. The work is necessary because of the additional pedestrians that Crossrail will attract, but FoHG and SEC have long argued that it is inappropriate to rely on the Common land to absorb all the additional passengers. Other space is needed to accommodate the expansion of Ealing Broadway interchange
3. **Ealing Broadway Station.** The fencing and heavy diggers now in evidence on the Green are part of the Crossrail construction compound that will remain for next three years. The precise timetable and many of the design and commercial details of the station redevelopment are still unclear, although Crossrail say they hope most of the construction work will be complete by mid 2017. The station will remain open throughout the construction, although the line will be closed over Christmas to provide a new escape footbridge at the east end of the platform. Disruption is also expected as stairs from the ticket hall to the platform are installed. Outside, some shops around the station have already closed in preparation for the [new ticket hall and station entrance](#). We understand that the acquisition of the kebab shop and details on the changes to Villiers House are still in progress.
4. **The Stables Building, 1a Haven Green.** In August the Planning Committee voted not to approve a plan supported by Ealing planners to demolish the 137 year-old former Stables Building – the old Haven Pub - at 1A Haven Green and to replace it with a block of flats. To their great credit, the Committee felt it was important to protect the old stables which the Council had locally listed only a year ago. The failed scheme would also have redeveloped Springbridge Mews, to the south of the railway to open a pedestrian route into Dickens Yard. We can expect St George to lead a renewed attempt to achieve this through some other means.
5. **Ealing Cinema Site.** In April a fascinating public inquiry examined the Council's plan to compulsorily purchase the site of the Empire cinema which has lain vacant since 2009. Ealing had teamed up with developers Land Securities to acquire not just the cinema land, [but a much wider area including Walpole House on Bond Street and Flava's Bar fronting Ealing Green](#). The locally listed YMCA building, empty for years except for some recent 'pop-up shops', would also be incorporated into the scheme and demolished.

[The site owners opposed the application strongly](#) CEO Justin Ribbons said he now regretted demolition of the cinema which he recognised the Ealing community valued greatly, but he blamed Empire's subsequent inactivity on Council interference. Many local people spoke against the Council's development as being at odds with Ealing's heritage. They also objected to an over-provision of new flats at the expense of other cultural uses in what is supposed to be Ealing's cultural quarter. SEC's long standing priority has been to regain a cinema in the town centre. At first we supported the Council's initiative as the most likely way to achieve this, but as the nature of Land Securities' plans became clear and as they seemed increasingly disinclined to improve it we grew more and more sceptical. After hearing all the evidence [SEC told the Inspector](#) we thought the most promising outcome would be to let Empire proceed with its plans, and we objected to the CPO. The Inspector's decision is due this autumn.
6. **The Old YMCA.** If the Cinema CPO succeeds, the locally listed YMCA building on Bond Street will be demolished. The CPO inquiry led a new group - 'Save the Old YMCA Building' – to apply for it to be declared an Asset of Community Value under recent Localism legislation. Approval would have given the Group the right to buy the building for community use. The Council ruled in September against the application, despite strong local support. You can see a copy of the Council's decisions and The Victorian Society submission (with lots of nice photos) via our web site.
7. **BT Telephone Exchange, Gordon Rd.** An application (P/2015/4089) has been made to redevelop the old BT telephone exchange for housing. The development ([see the file labelled D-A Final HR](#)) will be in two phases. Phase 1 will provide 142 flats in 3 block rising to 13 storeys along the railway during which time Castle House on Gordon Road will remain in use. Phase 2 will replace Castle House with 18 houses fronting Gordon Road and 134 further flats in 3 linked 6 storey flats behind. There will be 2 new roads opening onto Gordon Road giving access to the new homes, plus a pedestrian link to West Ealing Station past the Drayton Pub. The official consultation deadline has now closed, but the planners will still accept further comments on them.
8. [West Ealing Centre Neighbours](#) have enlisted leading planning consultants [rCOH Ltd](#) to help prepare their plan for West Ealing Town Centre. They are on track to publish the details this November. With developments coming thick and fast, a plan is needed urgently.
[The BHS store is the next likely to be demolished](#) . Developers Southern Grove are working up plans for

around 140 flats and ground floor shops to be provided in a new block of 12 storeys or so.

Earlier this summer, there was much amusement when the screens hiding the new Holiday Inn Express Hotel on the aptly named Bright House site were removed to reveal a gleaming gold finish.

9. **Campaign for an Ealing Performing Arts Centre** Plans for a performance arts centre are progressing behind the scenes. No public funds will be made available, but the Council is supporting the initiative by convening discussions with major stakeholders and the University. The Council has also agreed to make a general provision within the Community Infrastructure Levy (a charge on new development) for "leisure and cultural amenities in the cultural quarter, particularly for performance and arts facilities". Find out more at <http://www.cepac.org.uk/>.
10. **News from CENF.** A draft Neighbourhood Plan for Central Ealing is being presented to Ealing Council's planners. Policies cover shops, offices and jobs; heritage and open space; getting around; and Ealing's cultural facilities. There are also proposals for some specific development sites.
11. Next stage is a formal public consultation, likely to start in November, which will lead to a full public examination and a referendum of residents and businesses in the new year. You can keep in touch through the Forum's Newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/p8405>, or CENF's web site at <http://www.centralealingforum.com/>.

If our newsletters are of interest please pass them on, then get in touch at mail@saveealingscentre.com to say so. Visit **the SEC website** at <http://www.saveealingscentre.com/> **for more information on most of the above items.**