

Ealing Squash Club ... *continued*

The proposed development would have very limited access and would create potentially dangerous traffic movements, with vehicles crossing the crowded pavement alongside the shops, station forecourt and bus stops.

Durston House School

Durston House School is proposing a purpose-built new school on its land at Castlebar Field, Carlton Road. It currently operates from three converted buildings on Castlebar Road and Longfield Road, and uses Castlebar Field for sport and recreation.

The School wants to consolidate on to a single site to be more efficient and avoid the disruption of pupils moving between sites. The relocation would deliver better indoor and outdoor facilities, which the School would make accessible to local groups for limited use outside school times. The existing school buildings would be converted back into homes after the School relocates.

The School held a consultation on its plans towards the end of 2018. Details from the last event are available at www.durstonhousenewschool.org and include commitments to deliver a high-quality school that respects neighbours and responds to feedback from the consultation.

The School intends to submit a planning application in February 2019 and to start building in spring 2020. It will be necessary to assess the impact of the proposal on nearby residential properties, in particular traffic generation and parking, building on open land and whether the proposed new buildings are suitably designed and located.

Street nameplate auction and next phase

In December CERA helped Councillor Seema Kumar arrange the auction of old street nameplates that have been replaced by cast-iron reproductions. The successful sale raised nearly £1,400, with the proceeds going to Ealing Street Pastors and Ealing Soup Kitchen.

There are a few plates still available, with details at www.cera.org.uk/auction.

CERA hopes that the Central Ealing Forum will confirm the extension of the nameplate project into the streets to the north and south of Gordon Road.

Town Hall redevelopment

A planning application (190182LBC) by Mastcraft to redevelop the Town Hall into a 120-bedroom hotel has just been lodged. The proposal would retain the whole New Broadway frontage, leaving the eastern section of the building for Council use and the central and western sections for a new hotel. The central section, behind the frontage, comprises later extensions, which would be replaced with a new building fronting Dickens Yard, as shown below. This should also remove some low-level extensions behind the Victoria Hall, improving the Hall's rear elevation.

The planning application has 100 documents which can be accessed via this link: <https://pam.ealing.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PLDRBBJMIX700>. Comments should be received by the Council before 22 February. CERA will be commenting. One major concern is over access to and use of the Victoria Hall, which was paid for by public subscription and intended for community use. It is governed by a Trust being considered by the Charity Commission (see CERA Newsletter Winter 2017/18).



CERA NEWS



News from Central Ealing Residents' Association

CERA hotline: email: info@cera.org.uk - web: cera.org.uk

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CERA AGM

At the recent AGM our chairman announced that 2018 was CERA's 50th anniversary. He briefly outlined some of the work undertaken over the last 50 years and how it has changed, then the activities of the last 12 months. He gave updates on licensing work and the large development schemes in central Ealing, such as 10-40 The Broadway, Filmworks, the BT scheme in Gordon Road, and the Perceval House and Town Hall redevelopments. Another issue, which has taken up an increasing amount of CERA's time over the last 12 months, has been back garden residential developments (see below).

Will French, a CERA committee member and chairman of Save Ealing's Centre (SEC), then gave a presentation examining the changes and opportunities in central Ealing over the last decade and how SEC has been actively involved. He described how some 30 Ealing-based resident and community groups had come together in 2007 to form SEC, Ealing town centre having deteriorated over the years. With Westfield in White City triggering the departure of popular stores like Bentalls, it faced major change. Many in the community were uneasy that LBE's response to Westfield was sweeping town centre 'regeneration'.

SEC was therefore created as a channel through which the Council and developers would explain their new plans to the community and SEC's

constituent groups would then feed back their response. But local democracy in Ealing has deteriorated and opportunities for dialogue have diminished. Instead, the only way to influence seems to be negatively – objecting, campaigning, bringing legal challenges or calling for planning inquiries. For this, SEC has found wide-ranging public support.

Will said that over the last 10 years SEC has won some key victories – its biggest being the defeat of the hideous Glenkerrin scheme opposite the station. Another achievement, after intense lobbying, has been the considerable design improvements in Crossrail's plans for Ealing Broadway Station. However, without the Council's powers and resources, other SEC campaigns have struggled, leaving Ealing the poorer for it.

Will asked the AGM what it thinks of Ealing a decade after its 'regeneration' began. Members felt that there were some positives and, despite Westfield, new businesses have opened and there are now fewer empty shops. Yet the stores are more down-market (Bentalls gave way to Primark), there are fewer of them and many more cafés and restaurants. More disturbingly, Ealing's reputation as the 'Queen of the Suburbs' has faded. To attract visitors and the money they bring, Ealing needs to develop a new identity.

More deregulation of planning controls

Supporting the high street and increasing the delivery of new homes are worthwhile objectives, but Government proposals to achieve this by relaxing planning controls have the potential to cause serious harm to local communities. Subject to consultation responses, the intention is to allow,

under 'permitted development' rules:

- shops to be changed to offices or restaurants and hot food takeaways to be used for residential
- office buildings to continue being converted to residential use or demolished and rebuilt for that purpose

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More deregulation of planning controls...continued

- houses to extend upwards to the height of the highest building in a terrace or to the prevailing roof height in the vicinity, up to a suggested maximum of five storeys
- additional storeys to be constructed on top of blocks of flats, and commercial buildings to be redeveloped as residential.

Local scrutiny of development proposals and planning gain requirements, by local planning

authorities, amenity groups and neighbours, will be reduced or eliminated as the need to seek planning permission will not be required. In some cases 'prior notification' of the intention to develop may be necessary. The ability, however, of Councils to achieve quality design, appropriate standards of accommodation, parking provision, protection from overlooking or loss of daylight, affordable housing or other planning gains, will no longer be guaranteed. Worrying times....

Garden-grabbing and over-large extensions

Recent months have seen a plethora of unneighbourly development proposals, including garden-grabbing, oversized extensions and extended basements. Many would inflict serious harm on Ealing's treasured conservation areas.

Garden-grabbing is a particular problem. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities 'should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area'. Unfortunately, the Council's planning committee disregarded this advice – not to mention a petition signed by 1,300 local residents and objections from the adjacent Notting Hill & Ealing High School and our local MP – when it approved a planning application at **Ranmore, 18 St Stephens Road**. This allows the whole garden of an attractive house to be built over and the house itself to be demolished.

This imposing two-storey early Edwardian residence contributes enormously to the pleasant street scene comprising similar period properties. Although not in a conservation area, Ranmore sits between, and very close to, two conservation areas and is worthy of listing in its own right. The proposed flats are out of character in terms of scale, height and general appearance compared with the surrounding period properties, and the grey brick will jar with the adjacent red brick houses.

Some of these developments are highly detrimental to the conservation areas in which they lie. There are four CAs in the area CERA covers, and the Council has prepared a management plan to protect and enhance these areas, yet many recent planning applications ignore this.

A case in point is the massive alterations proposed at **59 Eaton Rise** to convert this late Victorian house into a block of seven flats. No. 59 is a grand two-storey, plus semi-basement, detached house built c1880 in the Mount Park Conservation Area. It is remarkably unspoiled, with most of its original features intact, including its striking columned entrance porch.



Garden-grabbing and over-large extensions... continued

The Mount Park Conservation Area Management Plan describes how the house with its neighbours makes a special contribution to the character of the conservation area. It is strongly against detached houses becoming linked together above ground-floor level. Despite objections from conservation specialists, the current plans seek to create just this kind of 'terracing effect' by joining the house to its neighbour, right up to eaves level.

If approved, the plans for 59 Eaton Rise would have many other grossly unneighbourly impacts. A proposed five-storey rear extension into the

Back garden would double the house's depth, increase its bulk enormously and destroy the original house's balanced proportions. With two large upper-floor balconies/terraces on the rear elevation, it would be overbearing and obtrusive, changing the character of this locally listed building.

They would also overlook neighbouring back gardens and rear rooms, destroying residents' privacy. Much of the mature planting would disappear to make way for the large five-storey rear extension with two private terraces at lower ground and basement levels.

Ealing Squash Club redevelopment

A planning application was approved a year ago to redevelop the existing three-storey squash club near the station on the east side of Haven Green. The approved scheme would have replaced the existing buildings with a new squash and fitness club at ground floor and basement level, with five floors above, comprising 31 flats. The proposed building was double the height of the existing, much smaller building.

The latest planning application is to increase the height even further by another three floors, and an extra 19 flats, an increase of more than 60%. Furthermore, the squash and fitness club, which received planning permission a year ago, has now morphed into a sport and fitness club with no mention of squash courts – a major loss.

In CERA's view, the proposal would be massive overdevelopment on a very constricted site, with limited access. The proposed, highly unattractive, new building would mar the view from much of Haven Green, which is the centre of the conservation area and adjacent to the proposed development. From the eastern part of Haven Green the proposed grey blocks would tower above the very attractive three-storey red brick terrace of shops and flats.

Similarly, from the north-eastern part of the conservation area, at the southern ends of Haven Lane and Mountfield Road, the development would tower above the low-rise buildings at the western end of Madeley Road, completely out of scale and harming the appearance of the conservation area. This large new building would also be very close to the houses on the south side of the western end of Madeley Road and would directly overlook their gardens and into their rear rooms, resulting in a significant loss of privacy and restricted daylight.

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