

Mount Close



Dolphin Living's proposal for residential blocks up to six storeys in height and comprising 178 flats has not been welcomed by local people. The present 1950s estate (shown above), near the junction of Castlebar Road and Mount Avenue, was originally police accommodation. Most would be demolished, although the developer aims to retain over 70 per cent of existing homes to reduce embodied carbon and has promised that 50 per cent of the scheme will be affordable.

Residents of the area have objected to the plans on the grounds of overdevelopment, adverse ecological impact and inadequate consultation, as well as breaching planning policies requiring



Above: proposed redevelopment

respect for neighbourhood character. Inadequate daylight provision, lack of family accommodation and unsupported affordable housing claims have also been challenged. Transport issues for this no-car development have also been cited.

Although the consultation closed on 13 August you can still post comments at pam.ealing.gov.uk (ref. 252540FUL) until a decision is made.

CERA AGM 2025 – all members welcome!

This year's AGM will be held on
Tuesday 7 October at 7.30pm
at the Open Arts Centre, W5 2TD

The venue is in Dickens Yard, near Christ Church and about 50 yards north of Gails Bakery.

An illustrated report of the year's events will be followed by drinks and nibbles.

We look forward to seeing you there.

CP House



CP House, 97–107 Uxbridge Road, is a 1970s office building of up to 11 storeys with a four-storey wing and extensive ground-level car parking. Planning permission was granted in March 2022 for a larger, mainly 11-storey, office building to replace the existing 1970s building. However, along with Exchange Plaza, which it faces and which received planning permission for about 11 storeys a few years ago, no development activity has started.

Exchange Plaza has now received planning permission for a smaller new office building and

planning permission for a taller and larger block comprising student housing of 504 units.

This is much the same as the larger replacement scheme at CP House (see image above) where the proposed office building is 9,500 sq m and 6,450 sq m of student housing. Interestingly, the new CP House proposal contains a proposed link between Uxbridge Road and Walpole Park, which would be a welcome innovation. However, there is growing concern about the huge potential growth of student housing in Central and West Ealing.



Berkeley Homes Gas Works (Green Quarter) scheme

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Ealing Local Plan Inquiry resumed on 16 June and will continue in November/December to discuss the concern over tall buildings. Meanwhile, on 5 August, there was a full day on CIL to ensure that a realistic level of CIL in Ealing is agreed by the Planning Inspectorate.

CIL involves payment for infrastructure such as roads, schools and parks. It was introduced nationally 15 years ago by the then central government. Over that time many local authorities have introduced the Levy to ensure that sufficient money is raised from developments to cover planned infrastructure and that the cost to developers is realistic. This is ensured by the Planning Inspectorate after a public examination.

In London all boroughs have introduced a CIL except Ealing, hence the need for the 5 August Planning Examination in public. LBE has argued, until recently, that rather than have a borough CIL

it prefers to have negotiations with developers on each scheme. It has argued that more money is raised that way, but if that were the case why does every other London borough have a CIL with a reasonable capital payment?

The Liberal Democrats argue that the Council has lost out and developers get away with minimal payments, to the detriment of Ealing's residents.

Berkeley Homes appeared at the Public Examination on 5 August to object in public about the level of CIL proposed and hope that the Inspector would agree, but this seems unlikely. The proposal by LBE is that

there will be two levels of CIL reflecting higher and lower house values in different parts of the borough, with a higher CIL in central Ealing than in the rest of the borough.

Berkeley Homes argues that its large proposed Gas Works/Green Quarter scheme in Southall will not be viable with the projected high level of costs and low values. This may also be applicable in other areas. We shall see what the Inspector says but it is possible that Berkeley Homes's argument has some strength and a wider range of CIL rates in different parts of the borough may be supported by the Inspector.

Local Plan Examination

Government planning inspectors have been scrutinising Ealing's new Local Plan over the summer. Once approved, local plans are supposed to set the policies for new development across the borough, so what the inspectors decide will be crucial for the future of the borough for years to come.

The first stages of the examination explored the borough's 'strategic' issues – primarily, how many new homes will be built here over the next 20 years. Ealing's problem is that while planning permission has been granted for over 21,000 new homes, development has pretty well ground to a halt. Just 134 new homes were built here last year. The slowdown is not confined to Ealing, but is reflected across London and around the country.

This is not good enough for the Government, whose target is to build 1.5 million homes across the country by the end of its term. Government inspectors have been told to do whatever is necessary to ease the situation, which is why teams of developers lined up to say that the way to get things moving was to let them build higher and reduce their contributions for public benefits like affordable housing. How these developers could build fewer affordable homes – most urgently needed in Ealing – than they now do is hard to see. Last year, we are told, only 13 were built in the whole borough.

Consequently, the Inspectors told the Council it needed to do a lot more work on the Plan before they would resume the [examination](#) and look at 'non-strategic' issues like local heritage or tall buildings. They have told the Council it must be in a position to restart the examination by the start of December.

Also delayed is a long-awaited review of Ealing's Conservation Areas – a process that began in 2020 with two public consultations held in 2021 and 2023. In April a report was promised recommending



various changes to the boundaries affecting all the CAs in CERA territory, to be signed off by the Cabinet in September. We now find that this report is not ready. No reason was given, and there is no new date for it to appear.

In short, everything relating to Ealing's planning policies is being pushed back for at least several months. This in turn creates a policy vacuum that will encourage developers to push LBE's planners into permitting more and more outrageous schemes. Watch out for yet more planning disputes in the months ahead.

