
Community Engagement Programme

Plans for the Earls Court Project are still at a very early stage, and EC Properties Ltd is committed to an ongoing programme of community engagement, consulting with local communities so that they can have their say on the future of their neighbourhood.

In October 2009, EC Properties Ltd set out clear overarching aims for the community engagement process for the Earls Court Project, namely:

- Engage all in the community
- Listen to and understand the community
- Transparency
- Be innovative and set new standards
- Integral to the development process
- Create and maintain momentum

The first stage of the community engagement programme took place from October to December 2009 and involved meeting community organisations and leaders, introducing the Earls Court Project team and explaining how local residents could be involved in the masterplanning process.

The second stage of the programme was a series of 7 drop-in sessions held in February and March 2010 which were designed to open up the dialogue to the wider community, explain the vision of the Earls Court Project and understand the concerns and aspirations of individuals.

A full report on these first two stages can be downloaded from www.myearlscourt.com.



Placemaking Drop-in Sessions

Aims and Objectives

The third phase of the community engagement programme consisted of 2 drop-in sessions that took place on 7th and 8th July 2010 and concentrated on the masterplan process, addressing:

- The creation of a new urban neighbourhood (placemaking)
- The emerging masterplan for Earls Court – emerging ideas and guiding principles from the design team
- Introduction to the Topic (advisory) Groups and an opportunity to sign up
- Feedback from the previous drop-in sessions held in February / March 2010

The objectives for these sessions were to:

- Introduce the masterplanning team
- Introduce the process for creating a masterplan for the Earls Court Project
- Explore key aspects of that process
- Discuss how any scheme might progress directly with the team

Where and When

The sessions were advertised the week before they took place in the local press and Hammersmith & Fulham News. Letters containing details of the sessions were sent to local community organisations and to the growing number of individuals who have provided their contact details at previous drop-in sessions expressing a willingness to be involved.

Both sessions took place in venues in the local area, and were timed to make sure that all residents were able to attend. They were open to anyone who lives and works in the area and project staff were on hand throughout to explain and discuss issues raised. The architectural practice appointed as masterplanner of the Earls Court Project, Terry Farrell & Partners, were represented throughout as were regeneration officers from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. All those attending were encouraged to complete comment cards.

Holiday Inn Express



Where - 295 North End Road, W14

When - Wednesday 7 July 2010, 1pm – 4pm and 5pm – 8pm

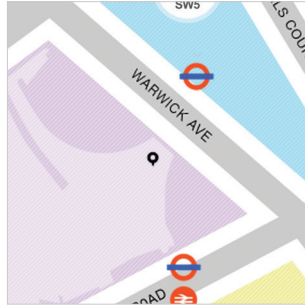
Earls Court Project team - Ciaran Quigley, George Cochrane, Richard Powell, Jeroen Bergmans and other members of the Earls Court Project Team; Sir Terry Farrell and Eugene Dreyer from Terry Farrell & Partners, and Philip Morris and Sarah Lovell from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

Local community – Gibbs Green Tenants and Residents Association; The Fulham Society; The Hammersmith Society; Kensington Hall Gardens Management Committee; Nevern Square Residents Association; West Kensington Tenants and Residents Association; Shepherds Bush Housing Association; owners and employees of local businesses.

Number of visitors – 57

How long they stayed – more than 45 minutes

Earls Court Exhibition Centre



Where – West Brompton Foyer, Earls Court 1, Warwick Road, SW5

When - Thursday 8 July 2010, 1pm – 4pm and 5pm – 8pm

Earls Court Project team - Ciaran Quigley, George Cochrane, Richard Powell, Chris Rumfitt, Jeroen Bergmans and other members of the Earls Court Project Team; Eugene Dreyer from Terry Farrell & Partners, and Philip Morris and Sarah Lovell from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

Local community – Eardley Crescent Residents Association; The Earls Court Society; Earls Court Square Residents Association; Friends of Brompton Cemetery; The Hammersmith Society; Nevern Square Residents Association; Philbeach Gardens Residents Association.

Number of visitors – 52

How long they stayed – more than 45 minutes



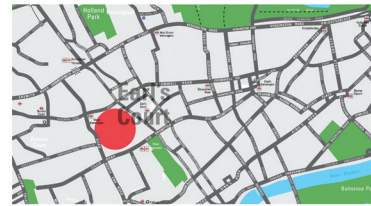
Welcome to the Earls Court Placemaking Session



This session is a follow up to the drop-in events in February & March 2010 at which we introduced the Earls Court Project, listened to and recorded your initial views.

The aims of this session is to introduce:

- The masterplanning team
- The process for creating a masterplan for Earls Court
- Explore key aspects of that process
- Discuss how any scheme might progress directly with the team
- Report back on the drop-in events held in February / March 2010



Creating a Masterplan for Earls Court - Inspired by London

www.myearls court.com

The centrepiece of the drop in sessions was an exhibition of 10 boards that covered:

1. Welcome - Introduction and aims of the Placemaking Sessions
2. Introduction to the masterplanning team
3. Explanation of the historical context and why Earls Court needs a masterplan
4. The strategic location of Earls Court in London, which will inspire the masterplan
5. How the masterplan will need to respond creatively to the challenges of the site
6. The starting point for the masterplan are the public spaces
7. Introducing the village concept and how they will integrate with the surrounding communities
8. Introducing the '21st Century high street' concept
9. Report back on the key issues that have emerged from the community engagement programme to date
10. The next steps for the masterplan process and for community engagement

Copies of these boards can be downloaded from www.myearls court.com

Summary of Feedback from the Placemaking Drop-in Sessions

There was a positive response to the Placemaking Sessions, the approach being adopted towards community engagement by EC Properties Ltd and the guiding principles outlined by the masterplanning team. Many of those who attended the sessions had been to previous drop-ins and there has clearly been a change in attitude from some residents who had previously voiced their opposition to the development. They could increasingly see the benefits development could bring to the area if a number of safeguards were forthcoming. Issues discussed are summarised below:

Historical Context

- There was considerable support for the approach to masterplanning proposed by Terry Farrell & Partners – in particular to the historical context, the priority of public spaces rather than buildings and the approach to integration with the surrounding area.

Architectural Design

- Many of those that attended supported the concept of the ‘21st century high street’ but there was a general desire to understand this more fully.
- The style of architecture was raised as a concern, in particular the height of new buildings, and integration of typologies with the surrounding areas (a particular issue for Earls Court residents). There was much discussion about examples of poor architecture and “clone developments”.
- The potential development and previous development proposals for Seagrave Road was discussed, as was the issue of building heights. The impact on Brompton Cemetery was of particular concern.

Traffic & Transport

- The issue of transport (levels of traffic and congestion) were again the major issue raised. The recurrent concern was that things are bad now and the introduction of large numbers of new residents and workers will only make matters worse. There was uncertainty as to how the infrastructure could cope with additional traffic and the impact of the development on the existing traffic issues and road layout in Earls Court. There was much interest surrounding the potential for a new north–south route.

Community Infrastructure

- There was concern about the potential pressure the development will put on the existing utilities infrastructure. Many raised this in the context of other developments planned in the area.
- As at previous drop-in sessions, concerns were raised about the scale of development, the resultant pressure on the surrounding areas and the quality of life of existing residents.



- The importance given to integration with surrounding communities was supported.
- A number of tenants and residents from both Gibbs Green and West Kensington estates attended the session. There were a number who clearly maintain their opposition to the potential inclusion of the estates in any development. However, most of the residents of the estates that attended the sessions were mainly concerned about the uncertainty of future plans. There were many questions raised about the impact of the development on their home, whether tenants' rights would be protected and what would be offered in terms of replacement housing.

Culture

- There was no support expressed for the retention of Earls Court Exhibition Centre, but some suggested the potential for some legacy or memento of the centre within the development.

Demolition

- Questions were raised about the demolition process and the impact on adjoining properties. It would appear this is becoming more of a concern than at previous drop-in sessions.

Other

- There was a lot of discussion about the potential benefits of regeneration and the current issues facing the area.
- Many expressed excitement about the opportunities and change the Earls Court Project could bring to the area.
- A number of those that attended would like to see the process move more quickly and were hoping to see plans and proposals at the sessions.
- There were a number of questions relating to the status of Seagrave Road car park and its relationship to the masterplan area.
- There was some confusion, and concern, about the consultation process that will be held by the three planning authorities (Greater London Authority, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea) and the community engagement exercise being undertaken by EC Properties Ltd.

Comment Card Responses

28 comment cards were completed; below is a summary of the issues raised:

Are there aspects of the masterplan process you are interested in?

Architectural Design

- Architectural typologies
- Facades
- Integration in style with surrounding areas
- Conservation
- The "4 villages"
- The 21st century high street
- The masterplanning process for the new development

Traffic & Transport

- The road system
- North-south routes
- Traffic
- Integration

Community Infrastructure

- Accessible, open and green spaces
- Social inclusion
- Employment and business
- Provision for the elderly
- Education
- Accessibility of new facilities for residents in surrounding communities
- Housing
- Environmental sustainability

Culture

- Museums
- Galleries
- Musicians and artists' studios

Demolition

- Disruption and road closures during the demolition and construction process

Other

- Hotel and conference facilities
- Specific interest expressed by a number of people living on the eastern side of the site who expressed their intention to purchase property in the new development

Would you like to be involved in a topic group to explore this further?

17 people expressed an interest in being a member of a Topic Group, with a further 3 possibly interested. Suggested topics were:

- Integration of the new development with the surrounding area including the built heritage
- The historical context of the area and how it will be incorporated into a modern plan
- Traffic, transport and accessibility, in particular for the less able
- Open space
- Housing – housing needs; examples of good and bad practice
- Architecture and conservation
- Environmental sustainability

Did you find the Placemaking Session useful, interesting and informative?

20 local residents found the sessions useful, interesting and informative. A number of those attending went further and were very complimentary about the sessions and the process. Other comments made:

- Support for the inclusive approach adopted by EC Properties Ltd
- There were requests for hard copies of the exhibition boards
- Some are clearly keen to see more information on the plans for the area
- A number of tenants and residents from the estates were under the impression that the event was to concentrate on West Kensington estate
- One person appears to have found the Public Spaces board very confusing

Any other comments?

A wide range of comments were made. There was general support for the approach being proposed by Terry Farrell & Partners but also a wide range of suggestions of what people would want to see included in the new development that would bring benefit to the area, for example:

Architectural Design

- Considerable interest (from Earls Court residents) in the issue of the height of any new buildings. There is a strong feeling that any new buildings on the current exhibition centre site should not exceed the current height of the present building
- A need to look at successful examples of design and regeneration from elsewhere (Richmond waterfront was cited)

Traffic & Transport

- Interest in the potential for a new north – south route
- Concern about current traffic levels in the area and subsequent pollution
- Strong desire to see a more pedestrian-friendly environment
- National Grid access facility on Seagrave Road could generate significant traffic for a period

Community Infrastructure

- Public Spaces
 - Accessible, open space
 - Play space
 - External activity areas (amphitheatre)
 - Making use of topology
 - Water features
- Amenities
 - Leisure facilities are currently lacking in the Earls Court area, in particular a swimming pool
- Retail
 - A farmers market is seen as a positive addition to the current retail offer
- Housing
 - Accessible homes
- It is felt that it is important to include a municipal or community aspect to the 21st century high street or elsewhere in the new development, in particular schools
 - Civic activities
 - Youth facilities (currently lacking in Earls Court)
 - A community building
 - Facilities for the frail and elderly
 - Places of worship
 - Activities and facilities to support all in the community

Culture

- There is support for the inclusion of a cultural dimension to the new development, in particular a gallery or museum

Demolition

- The impact of demolition on neighbouring properties and the Underground network as well as the removal of material

Environmental Sustainability

Increasingly important for new developments to consider:

- Power sources
- Heating systems
- Materials used
- Maximise energy efficiency in construction methods
- Waste management



There were a number of other, more specific, comments:

- Proposal for local (borough) residents to be offered a discount in the new development
- It was felt it will be vital to include the residents of the estates in the development process
- A resident on Beaumont Ave was concerned about the proposal for West Kensington Village, because
 - The proposal appears to ignore North End Road, which is a proper high street that needs help
 - The potential adverse impact to those that live on Beaumont Avenue, in particular in terms of light for existing flats
- It would be good if Rootstein (the mannequin factory on Beaumont Avenue) could be kept in the area
- A number felt it was important to maintain the legacy of Earls Court and to include a memento of the exhibition centre in the development. There was limited support for a new exhibition and conference facility
- Lesuire uses should be for older people as well, not just young people
- Cultural facilities like an outside amphitheatre would be welcome