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Your ref

Dear Sir/Madam

Ealing Borough Council: Central Ealing Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

On behalf of our client, CEG, we are pleased to enclose our representations with respect to the draft Central Ealing Neighbourhood Plan (CENP), which was published for consultation on 7 October 2016.

First, we introduce CEG and its interest in the building at 52-58 Uxbridge Road, Ealing. Secondly, we comment on the draft CENP; Part A considers the relationship with the statutory development plan and Part B provides comments on specific policies proposed.

About CEG and 52 – 58 Uxbridge Road, Ealing

CEG is a privately owned business specialising in investment and development across the UK, managing a UK investment portfolio and has a long track record of creating high quality places and spaces for communities to flourish and businesses to develop. Their collaborative approach working with stakeholders and communities helps to deliver locally responsive, design-led, sustainable developments.

CEG has managed 52-58 Uxbridge Road since 1997, with Chantryco Investments Ltd as the owner of the land. The property is a tired 1950's office building and is in much need of redevelopment. The planning potential of the site is recognised by Policy EAL9 of Ealing's Development Sites DPD (2013) which seeks an office-led redevelopment. In September 2016, CEG submitted a full planning application to London Borough of Ealing (LBE) for the provision of a Grade-A office building (25,273sqm (GEA) B1(a) office space with flexible 300sqm (GIA) A3 café space at ground floor) as well as associated parking, landscaping and public realm improvements at the site.

CEG is committed to investing in Ealing to create new jobs and attract inward investment by replacing the existing office building with a high quality new one. This will meet identified needs and demands for new high quality space and deliver the planning policy objectives for the site.



These representations seek to ensure that the CENP is in general conformity with objectives set out with the statutory development plan, including site specific Policy EAL9. This will help to support the Council’s strategic objectives for the Borough and support the Neighbourhood Plan progress through to it becoming a ‘made’ plan.

Comments on the CENP

Part A - Relationship with London Borough of Ealing’s Planning Policy

We take an active interest in policy matters and wish to share with you our thoughts from the perspective of an existing landowner and major investor in Ealing, to help ensure that the plan is both robust and in conformity with the statutory development plan. This will help the Neighbourhood Forum to achieve its Vision as set out on page 18 of the CENP, which we agree with and can help realise. We do have some concerns and these are set out in Part B below to assist in this process.

We support ‘The Strategic Context’ in the CENP as set out at paragraph 1.5-1.7 and the recognition that the Neighbourhood Plan must be compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the statutory development plan.

Key policies in the statutory development plan which relate to the economic prosperity of Ealing town centre include Core Strategy (2012) Policy 1.1 and Policy 2.5. Policy 1.1 states that a key objective of the plan is to encourage regeneration and renewal, with a focus on providing high quality office space in Ealing town centre and capturing benefits afforded by Crossrail. Policy 2.5 identifies the ‘office quarter’ as a suitable location for the provision of a significant uplift in office space, homes, retail floorspace and jobs. Specifically Policy 2.5 identifies a need to provide 90,000sqm of new office floorspace by 2026 and that this should be directed to sites allocated in the Development Sites DPD and the ‘office quarter’ (Policy 2.5). The site at 52-8 Uxbridge Road is one such site, whereby Policy EAL9 of the Development Sites DPD (2013) specifically seeks an ‘Office-led (B1a) redevelopment’.

Part B - Specific Comments on the draft Neighbourhood Plan

Specific comments on the CENP are set out in the below table for the Forum’s consideration.

CENP Ref.	Comment
Building Heights	
Para 4.11 & 4.12 (p23)	<p>The CENP must recognise that Central Ealing is an identified Metropolitan Town Centre with a designated ‘office quarter’ and that tall buildings are both appropriate in such locations are likely to be required in order to accommodate this planned growth. It is important this is properly and accurately reflected so that policy is consistently presented at all levels to give certainty to investors.</p> <p>CEG recognise the importance of well-designed buildings, in particular tall buildings, which is a requirement of Policy 7.7 of the London Plan. We agree that it is important for proposed developments to undertake a full assessment of the development potential of a particular site with respect to the heights, bulk, scale and massing of buildings nearby as</p>



recommended by paragraph 4.11 of the draft CENP.

Paragraph 4.12 notes that CENP has undertaken its own assessment to establish existing buildings heights in the plan area, which is reflected on Map 9. It is not clear from reading Map 9 when this assessment was undertaken and it would be helpful if this could be dated. It would also be helpful if the plan could capture the exact existing and approved building height context; the '9+ storeys' category perhaps underplays the position along parts of the Uxbridge Road. For example, the approved Apex Tower is twenty storeys and should be represented as such on Map 9.

5.1 Ealing's Economy

Para 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 (p31) Paragraph 5.1.3 helpfully references Policy 2.5 of the Core Strategy, which seeks to provide up to 90,000 sq m increased office space with up to 6,500 potential office jobs. Paragraph 5.1.4 acknowledges that Neighbourhood Plan policies are designed to take advantage of the coming of Crossrail and to improve its economic position in the face of increasing competition. This is important context for the Neighbourhood Plan which CEG supports.

Policy E4 Encouraging New Business

Objective 4: To maintain a balanced work economy with adequate provision for affordable space within a full range of business activities.

P35 Draft Policy E4 encourages proposals that support or facilitate the provision of space for new or small businesses.

The provision of affordable workspace should be considered on a case-by-case basis and be subject to viability considerations, as outlined in the London Plan (Policy 4.1). It is noted that LBE does not have any current adopted guidance on SMEs/Affordable Workspace albeit Ealing's Development Sites DPD (2013) does allocate certain sites as suitable for SMEs/ affordable workspace.

CEG considers that it is important for a prosperous and sustainable economy that Ealing provides office accommodation for a range of occupiers, including Grade-A office accommodation. This will help existing occupiers to prosper, grow and remain within Ealing town centre.

Policy E4 references a published GLA document: "Supporting places of work: incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces (2012). It is suggested that the "Creating open work space" (2015) publication may be a more recent document that should also be reviewed in the context of this drafted policy.

Policy HBE2 Protecting The Townscape

Objective 6: To preserve Ealing's historic character, heritage assets and streetscapes

P42 Policy HBE2 (ii) seeks to protect or enhance key views in Central Ealing, which is supported by Map 5. It would be helpful to understand how these key views have been identified and why they are assessed as worthy of protection.

Policy HBE2 (iv) refers to the 'office corridor'. The Core Strategy (2012) defines the 'office quarter' as being "along the Uxbridge Road (between Ealing Broadway and West Ealing)"



(Policy 2.5). For consistency with the Core Strategy it would be helpful if reference to the 'office corridor' in the CENP could be amended to the 'office quarter'. It is important this is consistently presented at all levels of planning policy to give certainty to investors.

Policy HBE2 (iv) requires that where development is within or directly abutting or fronting a Conservation Area, except for the Office Corridor, the height of frontages should be restricted so that they are consistent with those opposite or adjacent to the site. We welcome the exception made to sites within the office corridor (or office quarter to be consistent with the Core Strategy) but we would also contend that this criterion is unduly restrictive and should be removed. Adopted policies in the statutory development plan and 72(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 apply and provide adequate protection in any event. As required by these policies, development proposals are required to address the relationship with the Conservation Area and surrounding buildings taking into account the specific circumstances of the case.

Criteria (v) requires development to be assessed for the impact of the proposals on its 'Zone of Influence', however it is not clear how this 'Zone of Influence' is to be established or why it is necessary over and above the requirements of other policies in the statutory development plan.

At the base of Policy HBE2 is a requirement for development in the Office Corridor to contribute to the corridor and to maintain or create a boulevard of hard and soft landscape, which is also requirement of Policy 2.5 of the Core Strategy and "Area Spatial Strategy for Ealing" in the Development Sites DPD. This is supported by CEG. It also requires that development causes "no harm" to the character and amenity of occupiers and users of properties in the vicinity of development sites. The effect of this wording, whilst probably not intended, could place very significant constraints on future development in plan area and serve to directly undermine the achievement of objectives in the statutory development plan. In formulating development proposals, it is necessary for development to take into account a wide range of issues including amenity considerations in any event.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the statutory plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where harm arises, this must be balanced against the planning merits of the development. In relation to the site at 52-58 Uxbridge Road, Policy EAL9 recognises the redevelopment of the site offers the opportunity to deliver significant net increase in office floorspace to retain and attract business development in the borough. The principle of a replacement office building on this site, in Ealing's office quarter, is strongly supported by local planning policy. Any impact on the amenity of adjacent residents must be viewed within the context of its urban location and balanced against policy objectives which seek substantial increase in office space on this site. A replacement building of the same massing, which respects the existing conditions which residents enjoy, would not achieve the objectives of Policy EAL9.

Para. 5.2.9
p43

The supporting text calls for verified views to be submitted in relation to landmark viewing corridors identified within the CENP. Alternatively, it might be better if the CENP seeks a townscape and visual impact assessment using established methodologies, and where



changes to an important view are proposed, this should be informed by material which may include verified views of computer generated images. This would enable the townscape and visual assessment to be agreed with the local planning authority at the appropriate time on a case-by-case basis.

Para 5.2.12 p43 Paragraph 5.2.12 states that buildings higher than 4 – 6 storeys may be acceptable away from street frontage. It should also be acknowledged that taller buildings may be appropriate in the ‘office quarter’ recognising that the quarter lies along the Uxbridge Road, which is a main distributor road, where a number of the buildings are already significantly taller than 6 storeys. Again, the requirement for verified-view computer generated images, by which we understand you to mean fully rendered and verified imagery should be discussed with the planning officers on a case-by-case basis at the appropriate time.

Policy HBE3 – Building Heights

Objective 7: To ensure careful siting of tall buildings so as to protect Ealing’s heritage of human scale

Page 45 Policy HBE3 introduces additional policy tests over and above those in Policy 2.5 in the Core Strategy requiring that tall buildings will only be permitted if they are of the “highest architectural quality and sustainable urban design and do not have an adverse impact on Conservation Areas and their setting or on other designated heritage assets”. We would recommend that the wording of this policy is more closely aligned to the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 2.5 to ensure consistency and provide certainty for investors.

This policy requires that “Within or adjoining a Conservation Area, any new building taller than six storeys should be set back from the frontage and should not be dominant when viewed from street level.” However, the Uxbridge Road office quarter is close to a number of Conservation Areas. The office quarter has a number of existing buildings which are taller than 6 storeys and it is highly likely that to achieve the Council’s Core Strategy growth objectives, as set out in Policy 2.5 of the Core Strategy, that additional taller buildings will be required.

POLICY T2 - Parking

Objective 10: To balance the need for a reasonable level of visitor parking in the centre with the need to reduce the volume of traffic entering and crossing the town.

P54 It is suggested that the CENP references Ealing’s and the London Plan’s existing parking specific policy.

Policy PR1 - Improving Public Realm

Objective 14: To secure improvements to public realm throughout the Plan area.

P59 It is noted that public realm improvements to Uxbridge Road within the ‘office quarter’ should be encouraged as part of good place-making within Ealing. CEG supports the aspirations of this policy, noting that public realm improvements should consider viability, and other S106 contributions the Council may seek.

Policy PR2 – Landscaping



Objective 15: To improve and ensure the sustainability of quality green space in the public realm.

P60 CEG supports the aspiration to introduce landscaping to development to contribute to the greening of public space.

Glossary

P86 The definition in the glossary for the 'office corridor' is:
Office Corridor. The properties bordering Uxbridge Road W5 from 18 to 58 (north side), and 49 to 113 (south side). Also known as the 'Business Quarter', 61 and sometimes the 'Office Boulevard'.
As stated previously this term should be amended throughout the CENP to ensure consistency with the terminology used in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy defines the 'office quarter' as being "along the Uxbridge Road (between Ealing Broadway and West Ealing)" (Policy 2.5 Core Strategy). It is suggested that this area be clearly defined in Map 3, and the glossary amended. It is important this is properly and accurately reflected so that policy is consistently presented at all levels to give certainty to investors.

Map 3 – Central Ealing Character Area

P94/95 The 'office quarter' is a defining feature of the Central Ealing area and should be identified on the CENP's Maps.

Map 5 – Landmarks and Prominent Features

P98/99 It would be helpful to understand how the key views have been identified and assessed.

Map 6 – Actual / Planned Loss of Commercial Space

P100-101 The map should be dated so that it is clear when the assessment was undertaken.
The plan is dated 27/10/2015 and should be updated prior to submission.

Map 9 – Building Street Frontage heights

P106/107 See above comments in relation to Map 9 under the above 'Building Heights' section.

4. Policies and Proposals

Page 28, Craven Avenue We note that it is the role of the Local Planning Authority to assess and designate Conservation Areas, having regard to the Planning (Listed Building Conservation Area) Act 1990 Part 2, s69.

Conclusions

We would be grateful for your confirmation that our representations have been duly received. In addition, we would appreciate if you could keep us informed of your timetable for taking the document forward.

We trust that you will find these comments helpful and that you will take these into account in making revisions to the plan in advance of its submission to the Examiner. We recognise that the



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Neighbourhood Plan has been previously consulted on and appreciate this opportunity to add our feedback on the development aspirations for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

CEG looks forward to positively engaging with the CENF on the aspirations for this part of Ealing.

Yours sincerely



Pauline Roberts
Planning Director

Copy Nick Lee (CEG)