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### **Central Ealing Neighbourhood Plan – Submission response.**

The regeneration of Ealing and its development is key to the growth and success of retailing in the town centre. Running a boutique art gallery in central Ealing, the loss of customers to neighbouring centres such as Westfield or Kingston has a continuing negative impact on my business and it is crucial that Ealing ‘regain[s] its competitive edge with a renewed shopping experience and a vibrant mix of retail and complimentary uses/facilities..’ (point 3.6). This is echoed in 5.1.2 which states ‘Ealing wins less than its fair share of retail spending from disposable income of its own residents.’ We need to ensure that residents, employees and visitors from the local catchment dwell in the town centre, through a broad mix of facilities, rather than being lost to neighbouring centres.

Whilst I appreciate the underlying sentiment of the draft plan, which recognises a need for development to ‘respect the character and appearance of the area’ – indeed the fabric of Ealing is in its buildings (for example the row of Edwardian buildings on Bond Street) and open spaces – which are the selling points of the area – but I believe the plan is overly restrictive and prohibitive towards well designed appropriate development enabling us to ‘grasp the opportunity for new jobs, shopping and other facilities.’ (point 4.9.)

As such, the wording of Policy E1 would only allow retail uses within Use Class A1 within the defined primary frontages. The key routes of Ealing are primary frontages - it is important that cafes and other uses within the A Use Classes be allowed, so that our high streets can evolve to what the local population wants and expects, thereby helping to make Ealing more attractive and encourage people to stay longer.

Paragraph 5.1.11 rightly recognises that ‘successful towns will move away from a reliance upon retail for the provision of a broader mix of commercial and employment uses’ and goes on to state that, ‘in order to reposition and reinvigorate Central Ealing, an increase in the amount, quality and diversity of the existing retail and leisure offer will be needed’. I agree with this, but Policy E1 does not allow for it as currently drafted. It is requested that amendments are made to define ‘retail uses’ as those falling within the A Use Classes.

The ‘Filmworks’ development site lies directly opposite my business, and its success as a vibrant destination bringing greater footfall, street improvements and more activity to the area has a direct influence on the future growth of my business.

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I object to policy CC3 (Cultural Quarter) which states ‘... to ensure the number and nature of A4 & A5 food and drink outlets, licensed drinking establishments and amusement arcades remain subsidiary to the main cultural activities of the quarter...’ The success and enjoyment of the Filmworks site will depend on the combination of entertainment (film and performances) and food and drink establishments, increasing footfall for the town centre and ensuring the local economy strengthens.

On new developments, I object to Policy HBE2 , which seeks to ‘restrict the height of frontages to be consistent with those opposite or adjacent to the site’. This does not even have regard to whether the existing height (which new development has to be consistent with) is appropriate. There is clearly a need to make best use of land within town centres, whilst avoiding significant harm to heritage assets, but this policy goes too far and is inappropriate. Development should I agree ‘complement the historic grain and character’ but that the scale and size of development should be decided on a site-by-site and merit basis.

Loading and unloading, servicing and car parking is a key concern for my businesses. Policy T3 Servicing states ‘where on street loading cannot be avoided, plans should where practical include provision for strictly controlled pavement insets with limited hours of operation.’ We would support this with amended wording of ‘relevant to business needs and after consultation with businesses concerned’ replacing ‘limited hours of operation.’

I would also add here that the Central Ealing Neighbourhood Plan is a weighty document with a complicated language of planning policy, and I have severe concerns as to whether the majority of business occupiers are aware of its consequence on the future of the town centre.

In summary, for the reasons and examples given above, I do not consider the submission version of the CENP to enable to the town centre to grow and remain a competitive town centre to its neighbours.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Brian Davis.

Brian Davis  
Managing Director  
For Arts Sake

Cc. Ann Hunter  
Chief Executive  
Make it Ealing