



Ealing's reinvention: Dickens Yard (left); Ealing Cross (above and below); Frogmore's Ealing development (right)

A real option for London occupiers looking to reduce their costs while maintaining a quality work environment.



WITH the clamour and disruption of Crossrail making itself known across central London, investors can seek consolation in turning their thoughts to its profitable prospects in one of London's most tranquil outposts. Ealing, dubbed "Queen of Suburbs" by no less an authority than Nikolaus Pevsner, will benefit from not one but two Crossrail stations when the project is complete, improving further its already enviable transport links with the City and the West End. As a result, Ealing is in the middle of a property redevelopment boom. Not always uncontroversial, the crop of projects is promising to energise this westerly corner of town with some of the spirit of the West End itself, and combines low rents with excellent, up-to-the-minute facilities.

EALING CROSS

First off the blocks is Ealing Cross, the largest new office building currently available in west London, with 135,000 square feet (sqft) in total. With the first floor already let, requirements up to 118,000 sqft can still be accommodated, and the Ealing location provides a significant discount – at £42 per square foot, including rates and service charge, Ealing Cross has the potential to offer a 50 per cent discount on central London costs. Richard Harding, a senior director at DTZ and joint leasing agent with Montagu Evans, says "Ealing Cross offers a genuine option for central London occupiers looking to reduce occupancy costs while maintaining a high quality working environment."

THE APEX

Frogmore acquired the former Thames Valley University's site when the university moved to Brentford. It initially planned an office development as well but, fearing over-supply, sought planning consent for a hotel and residential scheme. Consent has now been granted for the Apex, a 21-storey

Focus on Ealing: West is the best

New units anticipate Crossrail's arrival, says Will Freeman

residential tower with a ground floor retail unit, an 111-bedroom hotel, and another nine-storey residential building, Garden Court, dedicated to affordable housing. Jo

Allen, director of operations, development and asset management for Frogmore, comments, "The plan is to replace the old derelict building on the site with modern buildings, with open space around the base to help break up the urban build of Uxbridge Road. The regeneration of this fabulous location is long overdue and will play an important part in the wider regeneration occurring in Ealing town centre."

DICKENS YARD

The plan for Ealing town centre, Dickens Yard, is a mixed-use scheme from St George. Approved after some local resistance, the four acre site will offer 110,000 sqft of cafes, boutique shops and residential apartments, aiming to bring niche and high-end retail and restaurants to Ealing. Residential sales were launched this February. Working around much-loved local heritage sites including the listed town hall, locally-listed fire station and St Christ the Saviour Church, Dickens Yard aims to integrate old and new.

Crossrail's completion in 2018 may seem a long way off, but with Ealing's redevelopment going fast, now might just be the time to invest in its prospects.



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HISTORY

Ealing boasts a twelfth-century church and has been inhabited for millennia, but by the nineteenth century became a fashionable escape from London's bustle and began to gain the name of "Queen of Suburbs".

CULTURE

The annual Ealing summer festivals bring real ale, comedy, jazz, opera, world music and blues to Walpole Park. Ealing's famous film studios, the oldest in the world, not only produced such English classics as *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *The Ladykillers*, but more recently were used to film scenes for *Notting Hill* and *Shaun of the Dead*, and the servants' scenes from *Downton Abbey*.

RAIL

Ealing boasts excellent transport links to the West End and the City by underground (Central and District lines – 22 minutes to the West End) and overground rail (London Paddington 10 minutes, Heathrow 18 minutes). Ealing will benefit from two Crossrail stations, West Ealing and Ealing Broadway.

ROAD

From its west London location, Ealing provides easy access to the M4, A40 and M25.