

**Earls Court
London
SW5**

Dear Editor

The planned demolition of the iconic landmark Earls Court Exhibition Centres is nothing but cultural vandalism. The authentic Art Deco building represents the visual heart and hub of a community vital to the life-blood of the London economy. The venue attracts on an international scale, with a history of millions of visitors and crowd-drawing events on the world map.

The last minute add-on of a significantly smaller 'cultural' building offers scant compensation for the loss of the Exhibition Centres. Trade shows, product fairs, artists, musicians and performers hold this venue in high esteem because it offers an unrivalled space in a central location. The substantial loss of income to local traders and to London as a whole is inexcusable.

Nothing about the so-called Masterplan is beneficial for either the neighbouring community or for the long-term economy, only more shops, offices and apartments for the super-wealthy. These pseudo-parochial planned developments, under-occupied by overseas investors and speculators, a mere 11% of which is 'affordable', look nothing like 'villages'. London's skyline is already at risk according to UNESCO and yet the shameless glut of luxury property building continues. It is a scandal that will scar the capital forever and a bubble that will have to burst in the near future, inevitably.

This senseless plan is being ridden through roughshod by the boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea. Moreover the London Assembly recently passed a motion condemning Mayor Boris Johnson and Eric Pickles Secretary of State's roles in supporting these elitist proposals. London and its many visitors deserve far better. A far more modest spend on the buildings infrastructure would guarantee the Earls Court heritage for the long term future, with a continuing enrichment both of London's creative life as well as the national economy.

Earls Court Area Action Group - supported by...

**Neil Tennant Bella Freud Alannah Currie Holly Johnson Ozwald Boateng
Andrew Loog Oldham Jeremy Thomas Zandra Rhodes CBE Jibby Beane
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