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Wraps come off £8bn Earls Court masterplan

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Plans have been revealed for the £8bn, 4,500-home redevelopment of the site of the **Earls Court** Exhibition Centre, ahead of a planning application for its first phase later this year.

The Earls Court Development Company is overseeing the scheme on behalf of a joint venture between Delancey and Transport for London, which bought the 40-acre site from CapCo in 2019. The masterplan follows two years of consultation with people living in communities around the site.

The plans feature 4,500 homes, with both for-sale and rental properties and including student housing and later-living homes, with 35% affordable. The scheme will also include a public garden on a structure known as "the Table", allowing the scheme to reuse part of the former exhibition structure, as well as commercial and community space.

ECDC chief executive Rob Heasman sees the project as part of a broader regeneration of this part of the capital. Heasman told EG: "Earls Court has got a role in London, but at the moment it's a place people just pass through.

"Within a few years you'll have Olympia completed, you'll have Westfield White City coming to the latter stage and then Old Oak. There have been some amazing things done in the east of London but maybe west London is about to have its moment."

With a GDV of £8bn, the project is expected to bring in private sector investment of £6.5bn and to deliver £1.2bn of gross added value to the economy a year.

ECDC hopes to bring a planning application for the first phase forward before the end of the year and to start work on that part of the plan in 2025. It will include a new park in the centre of the site, 1,300 homes, at least one office building, shops, bars and restaurants, and new routes across the site. The ECDC said

the first phase alone would be "one of the biggest and most ambitious London sites to come forward in recent years".

The site already has meanwhile uses planned, including the BBC Earth Experience narrated by Sir David Attenborough. The masterplan will continue to focus on maintaining the site as a cultural and employment destination, including new venues.

Heasman and Rebekah Paczek, the developer's director of public affairs, said close engagement with local communities had been crucial in putting together the plans. Paczek said: "We do a lot of outreach which is not about the masterplan. We have a community fund, we do a lot of social value. We have charities that we house, that we support in other ways, we do volunteering. That extends your understanding of how communities operate - what they need, what they are concerned about."

Hawkins\Brown and Studio Egret West are jointly developing the masterplan with SLA designing the public realm. Sheppard Robson, Serie Architects and dRMM will work on the first phase, with Acme overseeing the office building and Haworth Tompkins and Maccreanor Lavington designing the homes.

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