

REVAMP FOR EYESORE MALL AS ELEPHANT AND CASTLE IS TRANSFORMED

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Revamp for eyesore mall as Elephant and Castle is transformed

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THE notorious Elephant and Castle shopping centre will become home to thousands of students and residents as part of ambitious regeneration plans unveiled today.

A new base for the University of the Arts London, including a campus for 4,500 students at its London College of Communication, is at the heart of a rejuvenation for the concrete mall, once painted bright pink to make it less depressing.

University of the Arts London's vice chancellor Nigel Carrington said: "UAL is proud to have been at the heart of Elephant and Castle for more than half a century and this development will mean we're there for years to come."

Other plans for the site, described by one commentator as "one of London's great architectural blunders", include a 300,000 sq ft area for shops and restaurants. About 1,000 homes for rent are also on the agenda for the land and a nearby site.

The plans, on show at the shopping centre from today until Saturday, come nearly two years after the building was snapped up for £80 million. The area is undergoing a wider £3 billion regen-

eration make-over. Subject to planning permission from Southwark council, construction on the latest proposals could kick off in early 2017.

Jamie Ritblat, chief executive of developer Delancey which is behind the scheme alongside APG, said: "The exhibition will show for the first time our emerging plans to deliver a fantastic new town centre at the heart of Elephant and Castle."

The shopping centre was built on a bomb site in one of the capital's devastated areas and opened in 1965. There were hopes it would be one of the first US-style enclosed malls in Europe but always suffered from a poor image.

In recent years a food market has attracted some shoppers back.

Lead architect Allies and Morrison has helped to transform former red-light district King's Cross into a office hot-spot for brands such as Louis Vuitton and Google.

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Jumbo development: artist's impressions of how the Elephant and Castle area will look after its ambitious regeneration, part of a wider make-over costing £3 billion

