

Now it's Over to the Inquiry

It's been a long haul but we are now approaching a decisive phase of the process. The Inquiry into the Try Homes application to develop the Campion House site starts on Tuesday 19th June.

The Inspector will listen to the case made by the principal parties (Try Homes and the London Borough of Hounslow) and also to Campion Concerns as a Rule 6 participant.

All the parties have now submitted their Proofs of Evidence. The Campion Concerns Evidence is on our website. If you want copies of the Try Homes and the Council Proofs then please contact us.

Our website has a complete list of all the documents provided by Try Homes and Hounslow.

The Council has objected to the application on three grounds: (1) harm to the street scene in Thornbury Road; (2) harm to the Conservation Area; (3) Encroachment on Open Space.

The Street Scene

The proposed main building is, by Thornbury Road standards, a very large combined block of flats and houses. There are no other structures remotely on the same scale in Thornbury Road. The corresponding building density would also be unlike anything else in the Road.

The view of the Council and of Campion Concerns is that this large block structure would be out of character with the street scene of Thornbury Road.

In rejecting the application the Council put its view about the street scene this way:

"The proposed development, by reason of its position, size, design and appearance and landscaping, would have an undue adverse impact on the street scene and on the setting of Campion House."

The Council pointed out that the proposed scheme would be contrary to various policies including those on (1) high quality buildings and urban design (2) protection of buildings of local townscape character, (3) location of new housing development, (4) housing standards and guidelines, (5) trees and community woodland, (6) heritage conservation, (7) biodiversity and nature conservation.

The Conservation Area

In its application the developer described the Spring Grove Conservation Area in largely negative terms and pointed out that at an Inquiry they would have the right to challenge its designation as a conservation area.

This is what the developer's Inquiry papers seek to do.

The Council concluded that "The proposed development, by reason of its position, size, design and appearance and landscaping, would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Spring Grove Conservation Area."

Encroaching on Open Space

National, regional, and Hounslow policies say that open space should be protected. At Brunel the Council allowed the open space to be encroached on because of alleged "very special circumstances". There was a suggestion that the same should apply to the Campion application. The Councillors on the planning committee decided that there was no good reason to allow more open space to disappear.

Watch our website

We will update the website as we get more information about the Inquiry.

The Public Inquiry

Start Date:
Tuesday 19th June

Start Time:
10.00 a.m.

Place:
Brentford Free Church

Projected duration:
Six days

You Can Attend

The letter to residents informing them of the Inquiry said "If you consider your best interests are served by attending the Public Inquiry please do so. If you want to speak at the Public Inquiry please indicate this to the Inspector at the appropriate time".

The letter also said that all the papers for the Inquiry are available for viewing at the Reception Desk at the Civic Centre between 1.00 pm and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday.

If you can't get to the Civic Centre but want to see the papers then please contact Campion Concerns.

The Inquiry Papers

Hounslow has produced two papers to defend its rejection of the application. The first is by the Case Officer Burnetta Van Stipriaan. It sets out the Council's reasons in terms of planning policy as to why the Council considered the application inappropriate.

The second paper deals with the Spring Grove Conservation Area. It is by Maggie Urquhart, the Council's Planning Officer responsible for Conservation Areas. The paper provides a detailed and interesting analysis of the

conservation area and shows clearly why the proposed Try Homes scheme would be harmful to that area.

The Council's papers come with 30 detailed, and often quite lengthy appendices.

The developer has provided three main papers: (1) a main statement by Richard Tilley; (2) an appraisal of the conservation area by Jonathan Edis; (3) a paper on landscaping matters by Martin Kelly. The papers come with 46 appendices (including some of our Newsletters!).

We are reading through the papers in preparation for the Inquiry. We believe that the Council has put up a strong case for the Conservation area and has explained well how the proposed scheme would harm it.

The developer's analysis, on the other hand, argues that the historical character of the area has been eroded and that the replacement buildings are of little or no interest. The logic is clear: if the area has no specific character then the developer has to make no particular effort to propose a design which is consistent with that character.

The developer's papers try to both say that the proposal respects the character of the area and that there isn't much character to respect!

How to get there

The Brentford Free Church

