

APPEAL DISMISSED!

The official report has been published on the Public Inquiry into the Campion House development. The Inspector has dismissed the appeal by Try Homes. Their application to develop the Campion House site has therefore been refused. The text of the report can be obtained either from the web site of the Inspectorate or from our one (address in masthead).

Our long campaign has been vindicated. Not only that but if you read through the report you will see that the Inspector has come down again and again in favour of the the most important points that we have argued all along.

The Inspector's Views

1. The Spring Grove Conservation Area has merit. The developer argued that its 19th century character had gone and had been replaced by incoherent 20th century developments. The Inspector says “..the original estate plan still survives albeit in an evolved form.”

At the Inquiry the Try Homes conservation area expert had no idea how many Davies houses remained. We said that there were nearly 30 of them and that they make an important contribution to the area. The Inspector says “These prominent original houses contribute much to the character of the area.”

2. The developer tried to argue that even though the area was described as suburban it was, in reality, “transitional” between suburban and urban (this was to justify the housing density of their proposals). The inspector says “... in my view the local context falls squarely within the ... description of a suburban location – lower density development, predominantly residential, of 2-3 storeys”.

3. The councillors added opposition to encroachment on open space to the refusal grounds recommended by the planning officers. This decision has been fully vindicated by the Inspector: “On balance, I consider the benefits of public access insufficient to provide the very special circumstances necessary to outweigh the development plan objectives intended to prevent such a substantial loss of local open space.”

4. We argued that the building was too long and too high. So does the Inspector: “... from almost every viewpoint the perception would be of a continuous frontage to Thornbury Road, some 100m long. ... At

4 to 5 storeys high above basement level, this would be unlike anything in the surrounding area.”.

There is a great deal more in the report and if you have the time we strongly suggest that you read the whole thing (11 pages).

Congratulations Are In Order!

Many people contributed to our campaign. They read documents, wrote our materials, delivered Newsletters, came to meetings/demonstrations, wrote letters, and kept our funds buoyant. Congratulations are due to them all. It was worth it.

Thanks are also due to the many councillors of all parties who took the time to follow the development in detail and who gave us useful advice (while sticking to the planning committee protocols). Thanks in particular are due to the councillors for the Osterley and Spring Grove Ward.

The Third Application

We now await moves towards making a third application to develop the Campion site. The Inspector has established clear ground rules. We hope that residents' views will now be sought at an early stage. We will bring out a Newsletter as soon as we have any news. In the meantime you can keep up to date by visiting our website.

From the Inspector's report

36. However, I consider that the design attempts to cram far too much development onto the site, which is in a sensitive location. This attempt to achieve a large number of dwellings at an inappropriately high density has led to a scheme design which is overlarge, monolithic, out of scale and far too intensive in use. I consider that the design has not been positively influenced by, or is at all compatible with, its local context. It would not knit in with its surroundings. It would harm the conservation area and lead to a significant loss of local open space. It would not contribute positively to making the area better for people and it would not respect the local character, context or community.