

Third Application Approved

But it's not the end of the story

The Inspector of the Public Inquiry into the third Linden Homes application to develop the Campion House site has found clearly in favour of the developer.

The Inquiry was held at the Civic Centre 28th - 30th July. The Inspector's report, with his decision, was issued 26th August. The full report can be downloaded from our website.

The Council's Sustainable Development Committee refused the third Linden Homes application on three grounds: (1) open space encroachment, (2) inappropriate design, (3) too many one/two-bed flats.

The Inspector found in favour of the developer on every count.

We had hoped that the decision would be otherwise but we were not confident that we would get what we wanted this time. Remember that the Inspector of the previous Public Inquiry found against the developer and agreed with almost all of our arguments.

Taking stock of the whole process since the first application it is clear that, even with the latest Inspector's ruling in favour of the developer, we have come a long way. The third application is vastly better than the first two which would have blighted the area. Our campaign has therefore been worth the effort. We have prevented a monstrosity being erected along Thornbury Road.

We always recognised that the third application, unlike the previous two, would not be a disaster for the area. All the same we had serious concerns about the application. The Inspector did not agree with us.

In fact it has to be admitted that the Inspector's arguments recognise little value in the case we made and that made by the Council.

So that's that?

We have two sets of concerns about the inspection process. One is that the Hounslow planning officers, in our view, did not prepare the best possible case for the Inquiry. Thus the Housing officer had supplied no local housing information to support the Council's contention that the supply of one/two bed flats was excessive. On the question of open space there were no detailed maps showing how the Council had made its calculations and how it justified them.

We have other concerns of this sort and these will be raised with the Council in due course. That, however, can make no difference to the Inspector's decision.

The second set of concerns are about the Inspector's judgement. It has been suggested to us that he overlooked some factors that he was duty bound to consider. If this could be clearly shown to be the case then it would be possible to challenge the Inquiry decision. We are currently seeking legal advice on this.

A Fourth Application Is Being Prepared

A couple of weeks before the Inspector issued his report we were contacted by a company, the PPS Group, on behalf of Linden Homes. They explained that Linden Homes was reconsidering what it wanted to do with the site irrespective of what the Inspector's decision would turn out to be.

A meeting was set up with us, our ward councillors, Linden Homes, PPS, Wolf Bond Planning (Linden's agent for the development) and JTP (the architects). The meeting was held at the Civic Centre on 9th September.

At that meeting it was explained that the relatively depressed state of the market for one/two-bed flats had prompted them to consider what they wanted to do with the site.

They explained that they were exploring the possibility of building fewer dwellings (82 instead of 154), with a greatly increased ratio of houses to flats (61 houses + 4 maisonettes to 17 flats rather than 40 houses to 114 flats). The layout would remain similar to the third application but with greatly reduced density. See the reverse side for more details.

Exhibition for New Plans

A public exhibition will be held in the St Mary's Centenary Hall on Saturday 3rd October 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. Full details of the new plans will be on display so residents will be able to see how well the new designs fit with the surrounding area.

At this stage the plans are in draft form. No application for planning approval has yet been made. The exhibition part of the pre-application consultation that developers are encouraged to carry out.

It seems, at this stage, as if many of the key residential concerns will be met by the new designs.

The development, as currently envisaged, would have the following features:

1. It would consist of mainly houses and therefore mainly family-sized homes (61 houses, 4 duplex units and 17 flats);
2. No building would be more than three storeys – like those in the surrounding area;
3. The density of the development would be comparable to the surroundings (down from 78 dwellings per hectare to around 40 dph);
4. All the houses would have private gardens and most would have a garage
5. No social housing is currently proposed for the scheme;
6. The footprint of the new plan would be similar to that of the approved scheme;
7. The area in the south west corner would become publicly accessible (unlike the approved scheme);
8. Tigar Hall would be converted to duplex units (maisonettes) instead of the community facility and management office of the approved scheme.
9. There would be no underground car park.

We asked that a model of the proposed development



The flats would be in Campion House (8) and Block A. The rest of the development would be houses (59 4-bed, 2 3-bed, 4 maisonettes). The houses are a mix of detached and semi-detached.

be provided at the Exhibition but we have been told that it is unlikely to be ready by then.

PPS asked to see this Newsletter to check for the accuracy of our account of the new plan. We agreed. In return, we asked that we have oversight of any questionnaires that might be used to collect residential feedback. We want to avoid the feedback problems that were experienced in connection with earlier applications. PPS has told us that it is willing to share information and to work with us.

Public Exhibition of New Campion Designs

Centenary Hall, St Mary's Church

Saturday 3rd October

From 11.00 a.m. To 3.00 p.m.

***Will the new designs meet your concerns?
Come and see for yourself.***