

Petition A Big Success!

Residents make their view clear

The support for our recent petition has sent a message to the developer (Try Homes) in the clearest possible terms that residents are opposed to anything like the company's current proposals.

The petition made five points:

(1) We want a development **THAT IS SENSITIVE** to the **character of the local area** and its **conservation status** i.e. one that will preserve and enhance the Spring Grove conservation area, in particular due consideration to heights, densities and distances from boundaries.

(2) We believe the land available for built development is 1.17 hectares and NOT the total site area of 3.26 hectares. Planning guidelines recommend 30-80 units/hectare for a site of this nature. This means that the upper limit for this development should be 95 units. The density of the surrounding built development is 33 units/hectare. The density of the development should respect this historical character of the area by not departing from this significantly.

(3) The **OPEN SPACE** (2.07 hectares) on this site is protected and there should be **NO ENCROACHMENT**. (Campion House is situated in an area noted as having a deficiency of access to local open space, and in line with planning guidelines **at all levels**, there should be no encroachment.)

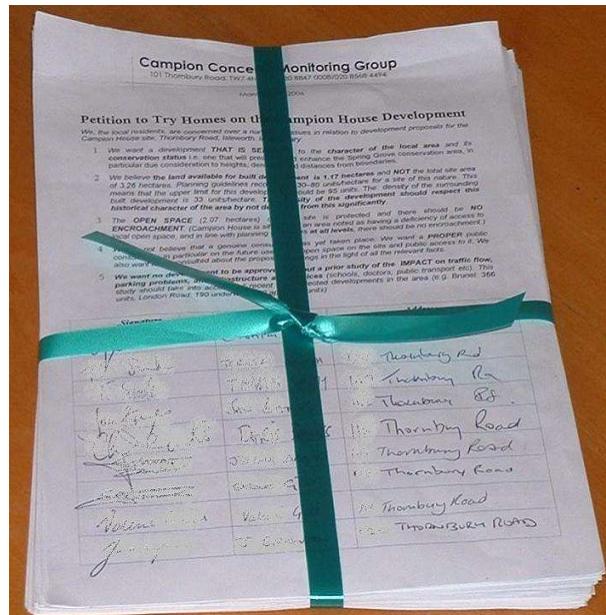
(4) We do not believe that a genuine consultation has yet taken place. We want a **PROPER** public consultation, in particular on the future use of the open space on the site and public access to it. We also want to be consulted about the proposed buildings in the light of all the relevant facts.

(5) We want no development to be approved without a prior study of the IMPACT on traffic flow, parking problems, and infrastructure and services (schools, doctors, public transport etc). This study should take into account all recent and projected developments in the area (e.g. Brunel: 366 units, London Road: 190 underway, 170 approved units)

The Results

473 signatures from over 300 households!

We did our very best to take the petition to every household in the immediate catchment area for the development and a little beyond that. Out of the



Try Homes got the petition wrapped in a green ribbon

possible 535 or so, we got a response from about 60% (the rest were away, working, did not answer the door and so on). Of the 60%, well over 95% were strongly in favour of our campaign. The other 5% did not want to get involved for whatever reason, and only a handful were in favour of the proposed development in its present form.

Try Homes claim to have residential support was never based on evidence. Now that we have given them clear evidence to the contrary they can no longer make the claim and expect to be taken seriously. **That** was our aim. Thanks are due to everyone who signed and those who did the hard slog of taking the petition, calling, often several times, on each household.

Elections

At the time of writing we have not seen the election material of all the parties. The Conservative, Labour and Independent Community Group materials all say that excessive developments should be opposed. The Conservatives have issued a special leaflet on the Campion development. We have suggested to the other parties that they do the same to help residents to make up their minds. Remember that it is local politicians who make the development decisions. Use your vote.

Sport England to be consulted

Mr Soni of the Indiana Gymkhana Club drew our attention some time ago both to the existence of the football pitch on the Campion site and to the fact that Sport England should be involved in any moves affecting sports facilities. We duly wrote to Sport England telling them about the football pitch. They responded immediately by writing to the Hounslow Planning Department asking for an assurance that they would be consulted about the Campion development.

The Planning Department hesitated before giving this assurance. They told us that they did not have evidence for the use of the pitch. We have now managed to produce that evidence from schools that had used it. That seems to have clinched the matter. The day after we sent a copy of a letter from one of the schools to the Planning Department and to Sport England the Planning Department gave the assurance that Sport England had been seeking.



Run down, certainly – but a tennis court nevertheless

Our messages to the Planning Department and to Sport England pointed out that the Campion site has not only a football pitch but also a tennis court. We even sent a recent photograph of the court. It is clearly a bit run down but just as clearly it is a tennis court.

Enhancing the conservation area

There is a clear duty on developers building in conservation areas to respect the character of the area and, where possible, to enhance it.

So far Try Homes has given absolutely no indication of either what it believes to be the character of the area or of how it proposes to enhance it. If the suspicion of many residents that their only concern is to pack as many housing units as they can on the site is correct, then this is not really surprising.

The residents for their part need to rise to the challenge and let the planners and the developer know what it is about the conservation area that they

value and how they think it could be improved.

There will be a development of some sort. We don't want the one currently on offer so we need to say how we think it should be done. Campion Concerns has set up a working group to formulate its policy on the nature of the conservation area and how it could be enhanced by a development on the Campion site. Help from residents who know the area well would be welcomed.

We are reading

- (1) Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, and
- (2) Guidance on Management of Conservation Areas

Both are published by **English Heritage** and can be obtained by phoning 0870 333 1181

The Next Stage – Individual Letters

It is said that petitions can have an impact on politicians but that planners react more to individual letters. We have to do both. We've shown that the overwhelming majority of residents are opposed to anything like the proposals made so far with our petition. Soon we will need to move on to encouraging large numbers of residents to write individual letters to the Planning Department.

When the time comes for writing letters we will compile a list of the issues we have dealt with for residents who might find this helpful.

**Petitions make the point to politicians.
Individual letters make the point to planners.**

We want as many residents as possible to write to the Planning Department when the details of the application are known.

It is important that the letters are individually expressed but it would also be helpful if some clear general concerns emerge.

Residents will have a wide variety of concerns: excessive housing density, traffic problems, pressure on local services, loss of open space and many other issues. When we see the details of the application we will be interested also in questions of design, renewable energy features, the quality of the homes, sustainable drainage methods and so on.

When we have more detail we will do our best to suggest possible points to raise. It will be really helpful if, in addition, residents raise issues of their own. These may be based on personal experience, on knowledge of the area, on questions of design and a host of other things. The important thing is to be prepared to put some time aside to ensure that the planners are left in no doubt about the strength of residential concern.

Breaking News: Try Homes says it has submitted the application

On Friday 28th April we received a letter from Mr Nicholson of Try Homes in response to our petition. Much of the letter is devoted to defending Try Homes' consultation of residents as genuine and accusing Campion Concerns of "misrepresentation" and "misinformation". According to the letter Try Homes has submitted its application for the Campion development. The case officer for the development wrote to us on the afternoon of the 28th by which time she had not received it. She will not be in her office until next Wednesday. We expect to hear something therefore about the Council's consultation of residents at the end of next week. Try Homes had previously agreed to provide copies of the application papers to Campion Concerns. Nothing so far. We will keep residents informed. If you have an Internet connection watch our website for latest news. Update your neighbours if they don't have a connection.