

Residents Have Their Say!

A great response! Residents responded in grand style to the consultation notice sent out by the Planning Department for the Campion development. At the time of writing the planners have told us that they have received over 130 letters.

A response on this scale is very uncommon. We have checked over the last three years' planning applications and have found nothing like it. For example just twenty one letters were received over the Brunel development. Five to twenty five letters seems to be the norm for similar developments.

What does this show? It shows that the residents of the area really care about it and are prepared to take time to say so in writing. We were told by the planners at the outset that the most effective way residents can tell planners what they think is by writing individual letters

Most residents have given us copies of their letters and reading them has been wonderful. It is not just the quantity of letters that impresses; it's also the quality. Many of the letters are very detailed and

raise a series of well argued objections to the development. It is a shame that we do not have the space to reproduce them here.

Repeated themes show common concerns. As you would expect some issues come up again and again. Some of them are: (1) what's the point of a Conservation Area if we allow a development like this; (2) we want more houses and small blocks of flats; (3) the proposed building is out of character and would dominate the street to its detriment; (4) services are already at or near full capacity; (5) the traffic and parking along and around Thornbury Road are already under stress, this would make it much worse; (6) **it is not a matter of tinkering with the design, Try Homes needs to go back to the drawing board.**

Donations – a big thank you!

Residents responded generously so that our funds are reasonably healthy for the next phase of our campaign. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Campion Planning meeting postponed

The Try Homes application to develop the Campion House site goes before two planning committees. It goes first to the **Isleworth and Brentford Area Committee** (IBAC) for comments. Then it goes to the **Sustainable Development Committee** (SDC) which makes the decision.

It was originally expected that the first consideration would be at IBAC on 17th August. The workload at the Planning Department has been such that they have not been able to prepare their report on the application in time. **The application will therefore be considered at the next IBAC meeting on 14th September.** A Newsletter will confirm that this is to happen closer to that date.

The first meeting of the SDC after 14th September is on **9th October**. It is therefore likely that the decision on acceptance or refusal of the Campion application will be made then. Try to set the time aside to attend. We will confirm details in a future Newsletter.

Try Homes Still Trying it on!

On July 10th a fence started to go up in front of Campion House. This was done without the planning permission required. Residents and councillors complained. The developer then put in a "retrospective" planning application.

Try Homes is a subsidiary of one of the largest construction firms in the country (Galliford Try). They presumably know about conservation area controls. If they don't then one might ask what they are doing proposing a major development in such an area. If they do then this is one indication, among many, of their disregard for proper procedures.

Even the retrospective application doesn't get it right. The application is for a fence of 2.4m. For most of its length the fence is 2.7 m rising to 3.3 m above the pavement. Whether one takes the Campion ground or the pavement as the natural level this won't fit 2.4m.

Campion Concerns responds

Six months of hard work of getting our heads round all the appropriate planning documents laid the basis for our response to the Try Homes application to develop the Campion House site.

We received the Try Homes application papers on June 23rd. After a lot of discussion our responses were combined in a single folder, four copies of which we have sent to the planning officers. A copy has also been placed in Osterley library (it is packaged with the Try Homes application). If you want to see it but cannot get hold of it then please contact us.

Our response consists of 9 documents. These deal with (1) the main application statement from Try Homes, (2) the Try Homes assessment of the conservation area, (3) the unsustainable nature of the design, (4) the developer's response to the council's Sustainability Checklist (5) the developer's transport assessment, (6) the Landscape and Visual Statement, (7) the developer's 'consultation' of local residents, (8) the role of Campion Concerns, and finally (9) the architect's design notes.

Often we respond line-by-line to the developer's documents. It is our view that the application is of very poor quality and doesn't come near making a reasonable case for the proposed development. It was not easy producing such a detailed reply but we have tried to do so in a professional way and to base our arguments on clear evidence.

Within days of submitting our response to the planners Try Homes wrote to the department to ask for a copy. We don't know how they heard about it so quickly but it would appear that someone is keeping them informed. Not that we object to sending our papers to them (which we did immediately the request was made). We are just intrigued as to who it might be who feels the need to keep Try Homes informed of our latest moves.

The Developer's Exhibition

We mustn't forget the exhibition! Try Homes was required by the Planning Department to organise an exhibition on 10th July in the Church Hall in Witham Road. It was clearly done with little care. The application papers were laid out on a table with no explanation or guidance notes. In addition three artist's impressions of the development were prepared along with a few panels listing some features of the development. The artist's impressions caused some amusement or anger according to how residents felt about being treated like idiots.

The main picture was a Thornbury Road view of the frontage. The road had been stretched to make it look wider than it is to reduce the impression of height of the proposed building. Some out-of-scale pictures of people were also added to reduce the impression still



Try Homes' retrospective application to erect the fence says that they are very concerned about security. You can see just how concerned they from this high security "lock"!

further. No one was fooled by these tricks. The representatives of Try Homes had to listen to residents for 6 hours. If they were listening then they could be in no doubt that residents do not support their proposals. We can only hope that the Planning Department officer who was there made a clear mental note about residents' reactions.

You can still send a letter!

The changed meeting dates mean that if you haven't already sent a letter to the Planning Department you can still do so. (Make sure it arrives before the end of August).

Attend a planning meeting and hear the discussion

Come to the first committee meeting on the future of the Campion site. Hear for yourself what councillors have to say.

The Isleworth and Brentford Area Committee will be held at **7.30 p.m at the Civic Centre on 14th September.**