

Improved Design But Still Encroaching

Brief Background

The consideration of the third application to develop the Campion House site is in its final phase.

The developer (**Linden Homes**) conducted an extended public consultation through **John Thomson and Partners** (JTP - architects and community consultation organisers).

The third application was considered at the **Isleworth and Brentford Area Committee (IBAC)** in June. Large applications like this go to IBAC for comment before being put before the **Sustainable Development Committee (SDC)** for a final decision.

IBAC raised a number of concerns about the application as we had done prior to the June meeting of the Committee.

Thanks in large part to the campaign we have conducted for two and a half years, the designs of the third application are a very big improvement on those of the first and second applications. So to everyone who has contributed by writing letters, delivering newsletters, donating to our funds, and in many other ways, many thanks are due.

The point is that our efforts have produced results. This is not time to take our eyes off the ball.

What has been achieved?

It is worth reminding ourselves briefly that the first and second applications to develop Campion would have been a disaster for the area. A monstrous block along Thornbury Road would have been a blot on the local landscape.

The Public Inquiry Inspector agreed with us and rejected the application in very forthright terms.

Successive applications have reduced the number of housing units proposed for the site. Application 1 had 273 units, Application 2 had 239 and the current

application started at 168 and with the latest modifications stands at 160.

In addition, the monolithic block of the first applications has been replaced by separate small blocks on a similar scale to the Davies houses. Finally, the latest modifications have increased the gaps between the proposed blocks and Campion House. Other blocks have been reduced in size.

Opinions differ about the quality/desirability of the design but there is widespread agreement that it is a considerable improvement on previous applications. In addition there is a case to be made that the proposed layout along the Thornbury Road frontage would represent a real improvement over the existing buildings.

Please write a letter

Many residents have written several times at different stages of the Campion process. People may well ask "how many more letters do I need to write?"

Previous letters will not be considered for this application and the latest modifications. We

should not slacken off now. It is not unknown for developers to put in supplementary applications increasing their building intensity. Because of our activity the modifications in this case have *reduced* the number of units.

The task is simpler this time. We have obtained many improvements both in design and in the reduction of the number of units. Therefore we need to make representations about fewer issues.

Our recommendation to residents is to write short letters to the case officer (address on next page) making it clear that (1) they believe that **is essential to protect London's open space** as one of its greatest assets and (2) **they have not been consulted about this issue** – as required by planning guidelines.

Open Space

Why it must be protected

- 1. Open space is a major asset for London as a whole for both health and environmental reasons. That is why the London Plan says that it must be "rigorously protected".*
- 2. The protection of London's open spaces is Objective No.1 of the London Plan.*
- 3. Open space encroachment should not be regarded as a reward for good design. Planning guidelines say that Councils should refuse bad design.*
- 4. If open space is traded for alleged advantages on a site-by-site basis, as has happened at Brunel and other sites in Hounslow, then the consequence is clear: London's total open space will diminish.*

That is all you need to do if you agree with us. You may have other points about design, location of buildings, building heights etc. If so then say so. What we ask is that you write at least a short note to say that you oppose encroachment on open space.

And if you support our work

If you support the work that we do we would appreciate it if you would add a line in your letter to

say so. The developer has tried to argue recently that Campion Concerns is just a small group of people that does not represent residents' views. In particular they have argued that we do not represent residents' views on open space.

If you could add one or two sentences to say that you support the work of Campion Concerns and that you share our views on open space that would be a great help to campaign for a fitting development.

The Case for Protecting Open Space

1. The Campion site has an area of 3.24 hectares. Of this 2.09 hectares ($\approx 2/3^{\text{rds}}$) is land *designated as open space by Hounslow Council*. This means that this land should be protected from building developments except in “exceptional circumstances”.

2. There are three levels of planning (national, regional and local). At every level the need to protect open space is stressed. The London Plan says that open spaces must be “rigorously protected”. Hounslow's guidelines emphasise the same thing.

3. Both the previous Mayor of London (Ken Livingstone) and his successor (Boris Johnson) were/are opposed to encroachment on open space.

4. In his recently published **Planning For A Better London** Boris Johnson speaks of London's “precious green and open space”. He says that one of his main intentions is “To make sure the planning system protects and enhances open spaces”.

That is what residents want. Our councillors and planners should have this as their objective.

5. To protect Campion's open space we need clear figures on the encroachment the current application would involve. Neither the developer nor the planning officers have provided these. (Those given at the recent exhibition masked actual encroachment by confusing private amenity space and open space.)

6. All residential developments must have a minimum of private amenity space for the use of its occupants. This land is directly associated with the buildings and is part of the development. *We have had confirmation that it cannot be considered as local open space.*

We therefore do not agree with the assertion that whether or not private amenity space on local open space constitutes encroachment is a “matter of judgement”.

6. We will produce detailed figures for the councillors but it is already clear to us that the encroachment is far greater than has been recognised by either the developer or the planning officers.

7. If we ask “how much of the site would be designated open space (and thus protected from

development) if this application is accepted?” then it is easy to see that the encroachment is higher than 25%. But frankly, even if the planning officers were right in their claim (counting only building footprints), that it is about 17% that should still be regarded as unacceptable.

9. It is not enough for a piece of land to be “open”. If that land is required amenity space for the residents *then it is not local open space* (protected from development). *We must have clear figures on remaining local open space and replacement local open space so that real loss can be calculated.*

10. At the Public Inquiry over the second application the planning officers argued that the encroachment was 10% and that this was unjustifiable even by the provision of public access. The Inspector said, agreeing with us, that it was much greater than 10% and concurred that it was without justification.

11. It has been suggested that private amenity space can be considered as a part of local open space (i.e. does not encroach on it). We think that this is illogical and should be opposed by councillors.

12. Neither the developer nor the planning officers have measured existing amenity space. We have. Of the developable area on the site of 1.15 hectares only about 0.35 hectares is building footprint. The rest is amenity space. This appears nowhere in the developers' analysis and the planners have told us that they do not know the figures. The councillors deserve clear information on the issue.

Further data on these arguments will appear on our website in the coming days.

Send your letters to

**Burnetta Van Stipriaan
The Planning Department
London Borough of Hounslow
The Civic Centre,
Lampton Road
Hounslow TW3 4DN**

Consultation closing date: 9th Sept