



SAVE OUR SKYLINE LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO FIGHT PROPOSED HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL REDEVELOPMENT

Website launched - www.saveourskyline.co.uk

Leaflet published and distributed to 5,000 neighbouring homes

Public meeting called – 7pm, 13 October at Rivercourt Methodist Church, King Street W6 9JT

27 September 2010, Hammersmith, London. Save Our Skyline, a concerned group of Hammersmith residents and amenity societies, today launched a campaign against the Council's plans to redevelop the Hammersmith Town Hall area. The campaign, which includes a dedicated website, an information leaflet showing the visual impact of the proposed plans, and a public meeting on 13 October, is intended to raise awareness of these plans and to encourage the Council to think again.

Already there has been significant opposition to the Council's plans. Over 15 local amenity groups have expressed their reservations and objections to LBHF about the current proposals, including the Hammersmith Society, Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group, Hammersmith Mall Residents Association, Ravenscourt Society and Brackenbury Residents Association, among others (full list in note to editors).

Save Our Skyline believes that:

- The Council and their development partners **have not given residents a true and fair picture** of the nature of the development
- The size and scale of this development is **totally out of character with the area**, and will have a **negative impact** on surrounding conservation areas, **overshadow the historic river frontage** and deprive the adjacent Marryat Court of natural light
- The development will **dominate the neighbourhood** and impose on it **some of the tallest buildings in Hammersmith**
- This will **create a precedent for high rise development** which would overwhelm this part of the borough and the riverside in particular
- The compulsory purchase of the Thomas Pocklington Trust building, leading to the **eviction of the tenants**, including **nine blind people** and approximately 17 controlled tenants, **will be highly traumatic** and will have a long term and irreversible effect on those tenants' quality of life
- There is **no genuine need for yet another supermarket**, given the number of supermarkets and convenience stores in the immediate area - a new store would merely **undermine existing businesses**
- A further 5-600 new residents will have a **dramatic and detrimental effect** on overstretched local services
- As the supermarket is to be supplied via King Street, **local traffic will increase significantly** - especially the number of heavy goods vehicles - damaging the local environment and increasing pollution

- The Council's development design brief indicated a maximum height of seven storeys – the same as the current Town Hall Extension - **it is now promoting a development OVER TWICE as high!**
- The **loss of the cinema**, a local landmark, historic 1930s building and cultural resource, will have a major impact on the community
- Why build a bridge to Furnivall Gardens, **sacrificing up to a third of the most popular area**, much enjoyed by families, when the existing underpass could be renovated, or a street level crossing provided, at a fraction of the cost?
- The bridge will **fundamentally ruin the aspect** of the historic and legally protected buildings in Dove passage, such as the Grade II* listed Sussex House

Comment

John Jones, spokesperson for Save Our Skyline, said:

"We believe that the plans as they stand are seriously flawed. This high-rise, high-density development will have a disastrous impact on this historic area of Hammersmith. The Town Hall is surrounded by no less than six conservation areas; the development is completely out of character and out of proportion with all of these. The views published by the Council and their development partners have been partial and misleading, and consultation with residents has been low-key and minimal. The vast majority of residents have absolutely no idea of the real impact of the proposals.

"We are also concerned that there is an inherent conflict of interest in the Council having the authority to approve these controversial plans. In particular, we would like to ask the Council why - given their original brief that the project should not exceed the height of the existing Town Hall extension – they are now backing tower blocks over twice as high? This will have an irreparable impact on the area and set a dangerous precedent for future high-rise development.

"The forced eviction of the tenants from the Thomas Pocklington Trust building, in particular the nine blind people, will be highly traumatic.

"Hammersmithers already live every day with the legacy of inappropriate and outsize eyesores such as the Broadway, Kings Mall, the Premier Inn, and the current Town Hall extension. We say enough is enough!"

Sheila Hancock, actress and local resident, said

"I think it is appalling that the cinema has been allowed to be run down and that it will go, a Council should not just be about shopping but should consider the hearts and minds of their residents.

"The development will be very ugly - to reveal the old town hall is a great idea, but they are ruining it by surrounding it with huge blocks and decimating the much used and loved Furnivall Gardens with a horrible footbridge."

Ends

About Save Our Skyline

Save Our Skyline is a group of Hammersmith residents new and old. What we share, is that we are proud of our local area and want it to be the best it can be. We are individuals as well as representatives from residents' and amenity societies

For further information:

www.saveourskyline.co.uk
contact@saveourskyline.co.uk

Notes to Editors

What's planned?

Hammersmith and Fulham Council, in conjunction with its development partners, is in the process of submitting a planning proposal which will:

- Demolish the 7-storey 1970s Town Hall Extension
- Demolish the 3-storey 1930s Cineworld cinema on King Street
- Demolish the 3-4 storey 1900s apartment blocks belonging to Thomas Pocklington Trust, and the 1950s Friends Meeting House
- Construct two new 14+ storey apartment blocks containing 320 luxury apartments - but no affordable housing
- Construct premises for Council offices and shops in two new buildings, up to 9 storeys, either side of the 1930s Town Hall
- Create a 2,000m² supermarket (similar in size to Sainsbury's, King's Mall) - even though there are already 5 mid-size supermarkets within 500m of the site
- Develop a "new" public square between the 1930s Town Hall and King Street
- Construct a pedestrian bridge across the A4 to Furnivall Gardens and the river, with banks over 5m high

Local amenity groups with reservations and objections to the proposed plans:

- Hammersmith Society
- Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group
- HAMRA (Hammersmith Mall Residents Association)
- Ravenscourt Society
- Brackenbury Residents Association
- Ravenscourt Action Group
- Thomas Pocklington Trust
- Friends of Furnivall Gardens
- Ashchurch Residents Association
- West London River Group, representing 37 groups from Chelsea to Richmond
- Old Chiswick Protection Society
- Cambridge Grove & Leamore Street Residents Association
- Friends of Ravenscourt Park
- Cathnor Park Area Action Group
- St. Peter's Residents Association
- Westcroft Square Residents Association
- The London Parks and Gardens Trust