

# Campion Concerns Monitoring Group

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Note added 19th Nov. '06. This document was produced in response to the **retrospective** application to put up the Fence. The application was refused but Try Homes have shown no signs, as yet, of responding appropriately.

## The Fencing on the Campion House site

You will have recently received a consultation letter from the Council about the fencing in front of the Campion House site. The reason for this is that Campion Concerns, residents, and councillors objected to the fencing which was put up without the necessary planning permission.

The owner of the site is Try Homes which is an experienced development company. They must be familiar with rules governing conservation areas. If they are not then one might ask why are they applying to carry out a major development in one. We think that putting up the fence without permission is an indication of Try Homes' lack of concern to observe the rules and guidelines which are supposed to protect the Spring Grove Conservation Area.

We would like to encourage as many residents as possible write in to the Planning Department to object to the fence. Among the grounds for objecting are that:

1. **It spoils the visual appearance of the street** thereby detracting from the conservation area;
2. **The fence lowers security rather than increases it.** The police crime prevention advice is that the front of buildings should be visible from the street. The reason is that this allows natural observation of any illegal activities, including breaking into the building. (This may well be worth raising with the Community police if you have cause to speak with them.) The place for a high fence is at the *back* of a property where there is generally little or no oversight onto it.
3. **It is likely to be there for a long time.** It will attract graffiti and posters;
4. **It is too high.** You could point out that it is actually more than the 2.4 m stated in the consultation letter. At its lowest point the fence is 2.43 m but it is on ground which is 0.26 m above the pavement. The fence is therefore 2.69 m above the pavement. At its highest point (in front of the statues) the fence rises to 3.2 m above the pavement. This is typical of Try Homes – you cannot trust the data that they provide.
5. **Squatters' websites advise potential squatters to look out for boarded sites** as the best ones to go for. The fence is therefore liable to attract unwanted activity.
6. **The fence breaks the normal rules.** The Council's enforcement officer has advised us that  
*“ ... under the Town and Country planning Act (General and Permitted Development) Order 1995, the erection of a gate, wall or fence (where not adjacent to a public highway) constitutes permitted development providing no part of the gate, wall or fence is higher than 2 m above natural ground level. Where the gate, wall, or fence is adjacent to a public highway it constitutes permitted development providing no part of the gate is higher than 1 m above ground level, but within the national legislation the Council can require such a means of enclosure to be lower than 1 m if the Council considers that it is a danger to highway safety.”*  
In other words a fence in this situation (along a highway) should not be higher than 1 m.
7. **The fence reduces road safety** since, contrary to highway regulations it blocks the view along Thornbury Road for vehicles leaving the site. You could point out that this happens to be at a particularly dangerous point in the road (near the island).

We think that you will agree with us that Try Homes should be bound by the rules of construction just as ordinary residents are bound by them. Tell the Council that you expect them to be at least as vigilant about this as they would be in the case of a resident. **There is no reason why Try Homes should get away with ignoring the rules.**