

Wait until September

❑ I UNDERSTAND Camden Council officers are aiming for the recently “deferred” contentious developer Essential Living’s Construction Management Plan (CMP) to drive heavy lorries through Winchester Road, the pedestrian market area in Eton Avenue, and Swiss Cottage open space – originally heard and rejected by councillors on July 19 – to be heard again so soon on August 16.

This date is extraordinary given it is a time when many officers, councillors and residents are away on holiday.

The CS11 cycle superhighway judicial review is to be heard on September 6 so any further comment Transport for London would make on the CMP would surely have to be after that date, considering the two projects are planned to be constructed together.

The minutes are not even yet posted! Is Camden trying to push the 100 Avenue Road CMP through without proper scrutiny?

Don’t rush this complex plan through

❑ WE were delighted Camden’s planning committee agreed on July 19 to refer back the Construction Management Plan (CMP) for the 24-storey development at 100 Avenue Road.

As the members noted, this is a highly complex and technical document and there are still far too many unanswered questions.

However, we are greatly concerned about the possibility of the CMP coming back before the planning committee, with only superficial alterations, as early as August 16, barely three

weeks since the original decision and at a time when many elected councillors, residents, and campaigners are likely to be away on holiday.

There has been huge public interest in this development and the council must do everything in its power to ensure that any decision is taken in the interest of the community and not for the benefit of minimising construction costs for Essential Living.

Following the initial rejection of the CMP, there must be enough time for all options to be

explored in partnership with Transport for London, which is a key actor in this development but whose voice has so far been absent.

Although any decision on the CMP must necessarily involve some trade-offs, the impact of so many lorry movements on air quality and overall quality of life for residents of roads such as Winchester Road, not to mention users of the market and Swiss Cottage open space, cannot be overlooked and must be examined thoroughly.

In the interest of transparent

and accountable decision-making, we call on Cllr Heather Johnson as planning committee chair to push back against any attempts to rush consideration of this CMP, and to commit to bringing it back to the committee no sooner than September 20.

- CLLR LEO CASSARAMI**
Labour, Swiss Cottage ward
- CLLR SIMON PEARSON**
Labour, Swiss Cottage ward
- CLLR STEVE ADAMS**
Conservative, Belsize ward
- CLLR GIO SPINELLA**
Conservative, Frognaal & Fitzjohns ward



Impression of the tower

It would obviously make a great deal of sense if we had the expertise of all the original committee members that were present at the July 19 meeting.

The ideal date for a full house hearing would be September 20.

JAMINE SACHS
Chair, Save Swiss Cottage

Many flaws

❑ I WAS surprised to hear that Camden’s planning committee will consider the construction management plan for 100 Avenue Road yet again on August 16.

This 24-storey tower is

not a simple piece of engineering, and the committee identified many fundamental flaws with the proposal when it voted to reject it on July 19.

As the committee noted, the lorries using Winchester Road – instead of accessing the site solely via the A41 (Finchley Road/Avenue Road) – means the death of Swiss Cottage market, incursions into the Swiss Cottage open space, harm to local businesses and residents, and much more besides.

Given it’s being heard less than a month later, and thus apparently

resubmitted no more than a week after it had been rejected, how can the developer have amended these harmful plans at all?

In particular, since July 19 the acceptance of a judicial review of cycle superhighway CS11 will have changed the facts on the ground quite significantly.

This is not to mention that many councillors and potential objectors will be away on holiday in August.

This will mean less scrutiny and far more likelihood of the previous decision being reversed without the fundamental

rethink that is required. This CMP does not need a sticking plaster, minor amendments, or just more supporting evidence.

It needs completely revisiting.

And given the short turn-around time it does not seem possible that this has taken place.

KATE FAIRHURST
Swiss Cottage
Conservatives

Disquieted!

❑ CONGRATULATIONS to the councillors who successfully blocked Essential Living’s heavy-

handed, unworkable, Construction Management Plan.

I followed the meeting of the planning committee and was particularly struck by the attitude of the chair Cllr Heather Johnson, who seemed to be running a difficult, sometimes noisy, meeting quite well until, despite hearing lengthy and detailed arguments in favour of the plan from Essential Living and also, very strongly, from the planning officers, the committee voted against approving it.

At that point Cllr Johnson seemed

noticeably disquieted and upset.

When she moved on to formalise the committee’s decision to look again at the CMP she seemed systematically to misinterpret what the committee was asking for. One or two of the councillors had to clarify it for her.

Perhaps she had expected a different outcome but if so she should have kept her feelings to herself.

We need our committee chairs to be absolutely impartial, no matter what the committee decides.

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