

CAMPDEN HILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

13 JUNE 2008

COUNCIL'S "UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR" RESULTS IN GOVERNMENT ORDER TO PAY THOUSANDS TO LOCAL RESIDENTS

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea has been slammed by a government inspector for "unreasonable" behaviour in a planning U-turn and ordered it to pay costs to a local residents' association.

The Inspector, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, has ordered the Council to pay the costs of the Campden Hill Residents' Association in preparing for a planning inquiry on the proposals for Holland Park School up until the date the Council withdrew its application and pulled out from the Inquiry.

In the damning decision notice, the Inspector, John Parnell, says that the Council took four months last year to decide to withdraw from the planning inquiry and abandon their planning application, with the Council formally notifying the Planning Inspectorate of their decision on 23 November.

The decision letter from the Secretary of State says: "The overall conclusion reached is that the applicants [the Council] acted unreasonably in withdrawing

the applications when they did, some 5 weeks after being notified of the inquiry arrangements. An award of costs is therefore considered justified.”

As a result, the Planning Inspectorate has awarded costs to the Campden Hill Residents' Association for the period 6 August 2007 until 23 November 2007, meaning that the Kensington and Chelsea council taxpayers **must now pay for the legal and professional fees expended by the residents' association in preparing for the aborted inquiry.**

CHRA Chairman David White said: “Yet again the Council has been shown to have acted unreasonably in its behaviour on the planning application for Holland Park School. We regret the cost to the council taxpayers but it's a tiny sum compared to the many millions the Council has already gambled away on the new school project with not one new classroom to show for it. Ye again we urge the Council to pause and take stock of the situation and look at the alternatives.”

Ends

Notes:

2. For further information please contact David White on 020 7229 5684 or Nick Sutcliffe on 07804 623 396