

**Mr Mayor (or Deputy Mayor), Councillors.**

I am proud to speak on behalf of Riverside Action Group.

We are a non-political group, united on this issue.

We thank our M.P. Dr. Tania Mathias for her unequivocal support.

And Cllr Helen Hill for taking the trouble to listen.

Our paper petition, with signatures numbering over 1,800 and another 800 on line, states **clearly we reject the single option approach to the Twickenham Riverside**. We are joined by over 1000 who live and work on Eel Pie Island.

**Over 3000 petitioners call upon the Council to reopen the consultation and include the architectural designs paid for by Borough tax-payers, including that of the Riverside Village Group.**

**Why do we petition you?** Because we are deeply unhappy at the way we have been excluded from any choice of design.

We are displeased at the methods employed to procure Francis Terry as the 'Council's architect', as is the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The Council's brief to architects ignored the wishes of residents, and failed to reflect the advice of the Inspector of the Twickenham Area Action Plan (TWAAP).

**Promises made in 2009 by the then Cllr. True have been broken. The electorate betrayed.**

The Council has failed to take seriously local people's aspirations to have a meaningful say in shaping the environment in which they live; to look at the whole site along the river including the Diamond Jubilee Gardens.

The size and design of the development intrudes on our riverside, its boatyard, low rise buildings and the working waterfront architecture. It lacks imagination and vision. It succeeds only in dividing town from river, even with the minor concession to widen Water Lane.

The Italianate design, chosen by two Councillors, who lack architectural knowledge or judgement, reveals a gross lack of understanding of our town and its heritage including literature, the arts and the sciences; Twickenham is a town that must allow Bacon and Dickens to jockey for a place with jazz, rhythm and blues, and rock.

The TWAAP report states "there is a need for cohesive street scene design that connects different features and key sites of the town". Quite right, the name Twickenham means 'where two roads meet'. We don't want our roads choked by a faux Roman amphitheatre.

We are appalled to discover that since the Terry concept was rejected outright by **88% of residents**, the Council has spent upward of £200k preparing to re-present the design.

- How do we know of the expenditure? A Freedom of Information response tells us so.

There's no business plan, no shopping pattern survey, no traffic or parking survey.

- How do we know? Freedom of Information responses of course.

Has the Council considered the conflict with a range of planning, conservation and heritage policies?

Does the Council have support of the Diamond Jubilee Garden trustees? I think not. Even your Council representative on the trust has been disassociated from the plan

A second consultation will begin in 14 days. It is a costly PR exercise. The revised block remains a block containing luxury flats.

We are to be **re-presented** with a style of architecture already rejected by over 3,000 people.

And here's a wretched little piece of news: we are reliably informed that the Council is prepared to let us go to judicial review if residents reject the tweaked Francis Terry concept. Imagine this:

- We are about to enter a 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation
- We're told our opinions are being sought
- And yet - the Council is willing to contest the issue in the Courts at the tax-payers' expense.

How does this equate with the assertion the Council is listening?

How does this equate with the fiscal responsibility of Council?

Councillors: Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Labour, over 3000 residents of Twickenham, address you as individuals – please use your good offices to put a brake on this architectural and political folly. Represent us. We call on you to reject the single option and reopen the consultation on the design of our riverside.

And to Cllr Pamela Fleming we say RAG members will continue to offer assistance, but only if there is genuine participation in **the choice of architect** and not merely a public relations exercise to sell a decision made many months ago. The Francis Terry style of architecture is rejected!