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## NEW PROPOSALS FOR TOLMERS SQUARE, EUSTON

Stock Conversion and Investment Trust has briefed its architects to produce a revised design for the 8½-acre Tolmers Square, London, N.W.1, site, which has been the subject of much controversy during the past year.

At the annual meeting earlier this week, Robert Clark, Stock Conversion's chairman, stated that the new scheme will most probably contain 100,000 sq. ft. of office space, instead of the original 250,000 sq. ft. On the surface, it would appear that the revised design will closely resemble that proposed by Claudius Properties towards the end of last year. This was the company set up by journalists Christopher Booker and Bennie Gray, at the height of the anti-property developer hysteria which swept through Press and politicians alike during 1973.

Negotiations for the joint development of land owned by Camden and the site owned by Stock Conversion began in 1970 and agreement on the terms was reached in April, 1971. A month later, however, an election pushed the affiliations of the council further to the left. The new council decided to renegotiate the terms which its predecessor had agreed. Finally, terms were agreed with Stock Conversion, for the second time, and approved by the council on June 10, 1973. However, before the agreement was signed, Camden decided to talk to Messrs. Booker and Gray, who had conceived the notion of "property development by the community, for the community" in a much-publicised series of articles which were given prominence by several major newspapers. The basis of this concept was that Booker and Gray, through Claudius Properties, would develop the site for Camden and the council would retain the profit from this redevelopment.

The negotiations between the borough and Claudius broke down and in the early autumn of last year the Town Clerk of Camden informed Stock Conversion that he was now authorised to complete a formal agreement. This agreement has not, however, been signed.

The new plans for the site will include the refurbishment of the early-19th-century houses in Tolmers Square. The offices in the project will be confined to the front of the site, which is zoned for mixed commercial use. The area of office space to be included depends, said Mr. Clark, on building costs, but, on present figures, the minimum would be 100,000 sq. ft.

To a large extent, the Stock Conversion project is still very much in the air, as the company will need an O.D.P. before it can apply for planning approval. Since government policy is to restrict the issue of O.D.P.'s and the G.L.C. is resisting the development of further office space, Tolmers Square could remain in its present condition for some time to come.