

Tolmers Square: Last Friday the Joe Levy property empire (alias the Glennifer Finance Corporation) obtained its first possession orders against squatters living in Tolmers Square. For over two years squatters, local tenants and Camden Council have struggled to stop the community around the Square being destroyed by Levy's wholesale redevelopment plans.

Camden Council, originally partners in Levy's plans, are now publicly committed to a Compulsory Purchase Order on the whole area for their own development, to include council housing and amenities for more than 1700 people. The issuing of orders is waiting only for the Labour Government's Land Bill to become law later this year, when local authorities will be able to acquire land such as Tolmers Square at an acceptable price.

The 81 people in 26 houses who received summonses for possession on March 11 are determined to resist. All court cases are being defended, and after two days of hearings only five out of 17 have been heard (one of which was dismissed), with the remaining 12 unlikely to come up before the end of June. There are also more than 100 other squatters in the immediate vicinity plus many other local people ready to defend their community.

One possible reason for Levy's latest, and at first sight rather surprising move is that he is intending to renovate the properties and leave them empty until they are compulsorily purchased, when they would fetch a much higher price.

An updated version of the film 'Tolmers: Beginning or End?' will be shown on May 19 on BBC2 at 10.50 pm, including coverage of this stage of the struggle.

ANGELA PHILLIPS

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Original Soundtrack Album Available On Polydor Records
Scribbleplay By Ken Russell Directed By Ken Russell Produced By Robert Stigwood And Ken Russell
Executive Producers Beryl Vertue And Christopher Stamp Associate Producer Harry Bernstein Quintoponic Sound developed by John Meale

TOLMERS SQUARE NW1

SHIRLEY READ