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# 1 TOLMERS TENANTS REPORT

ON JUNE 5th CAMDEN COUNCIL announced that Stock Conversion (part of the Levy property empire) had agreed to sell their property in and around Tolmers Square for £11 million pounds. This is the culmination of a long battle to stop the developers destroying the local community and building officers. The council announcement has put a stop to the threatened eviction of over 100 people squatting in the area.

The Council by coming to an agreement with Stock Conversion have avoided a long delay waiting for the Community Land Bill to go through Parliament and then the long-drawn out process of a CPO. The price of £4 million is said to be what would be paid when the new legislation is implemented. However, it is no mean price for six acres of neglected buildings . . . it is 13 times their 1962 value. Despite the collapse of the property market, Levy & Co don't seem to have done too badly.

Squatters living in houses left empty by the speculators have been active in the community's struggle for survival. Recently Stock Conversion successfully obtained possession orders against some of the squatters; other cases were adjourned because of lack of court time. The squatters determined to stay put, organised a campaign to defend their homes. Now the council is to be the landlord of the area, the squatters will be allowed to remain until the work of rehabilitation and redevelopment begins.

The council published its plans for the area last September. They include housing for 1,700 people, community facilities, a street market in Drummond Street and some commercial development along the Buston Road frontage. Now these plans will suffer from the cutbacks in government expenditure and how much, in practice, they will meet the needs of the community is yet to be seen.

