



**Windsor:** The village of Old Windsor, a few miles from the Queen's modest castle, was once a small, quiet place with plenty of open space, fields, and a long stretch of Thames riverbank. Today most of it has been developed into private housing estates. All that remains of the old village are three large houses around the village church. Besides a small recreation ground the only open space left undeveloped are two 30 acre plots that include the only section of the riverbank still available for the public to enjoy.

One of the 30 acre sites was bought a few years ago by Billy Smarts Circus who use the land to grow food for the animals in the nearby Safari Park. The other 30 acres, all proposed Green Belt land, which includes the riverfront with four houseboats, together with two of the old houses, 'Church House' and the 'White Hermitage', are currently the centre of a deal between two local developers which is causing concern to some local residents and councillors who fear the only remaining bit of the village is about to be bulldozed.

At the moment the land and two houses belong to property developer Richard Pollock.

He has agreed to sell the land and houses — at an undisclosed price — to Michael Shanly. Shanly, a builder and developer, lives in 'The Priory', one of the three large houses grouped around the church. He bought his own house from Pollock two years ago but the latest deal between the two men threatens the very existence of this small community. Shanly is asking for vacant possession of the property before he completes the purchase. A move that will make 20 people homeless and cast four houseboats adrift.

If Shanly does buy the land residents fear that he will develop it together with another small site he already owns, spoiling what's left of the old village and completely closing off the riverfront to local people. As a resident said, 'One does not buy acres of land for nothing. Someone is gambling on getting planning permission.'

In the short time Shanly has shown an interest in the area he has already unsuccessfully applied for planning permission on the small site he owns next to the land he is currently buying. He wanted to build six substantial houses on the site and has now appealed to the Environment Minister against the local council's decision.

In anticipation of his deal with Pollock going ahead Shanly has just put in another planning application, this time for the White Hermitage (which he states on the form is 'vacant'.) Part of this once beautiful building burnt down

about six years ago. What remained has been allowed to run into disrepair and the large garden is now overgrown. Shanly has applied to 'restore' the old building to its original state by rebuilding the burnt down part with six flats and laying a road through the garden to 14 new garages. Shanly has denied that he is planning any large scale development. His denials hardly accord with his insistence on vacant possession of Church House and the White Hermitage.

Local residents who have seen the rest of the village disappear under bricks and tarmac are doubtful that Shanly can resist the enormous development potential of the land and riverfront.

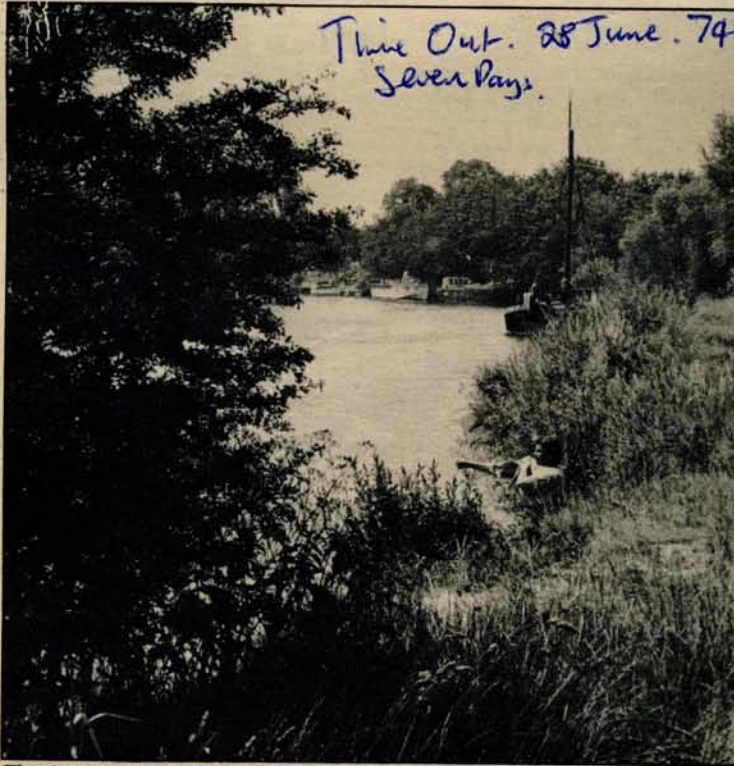
**Tolmers Square:** Joe Levy may have officially retired, but the efforts of his company (Stock Conversion) to turn Tolmers Square into another Euston Towers continue apace. This week's meeting of Camden council's Community Planning and Resources Committee was still considering whether or not to go ahead with a CPO on the land Stock Conversions owns. The most crucial part of a report to the committee reads as follows: 'A CPO would obviously be strenuously resisted by them unless it were part of a re-negotiated joint development. The officers require instructions as to whether any renewed approach should be made to Stock Conversion, and, if so, on what basis.'



Tolmers Square.

A Greek family of three adults and two children live on two floors in Hampstead Road for which they pay £20 per month. The third floor has been empty since 1960 and is presently occupied by an assortment of buckets and baths to collect water and stop it filtering through into the flat. The basement and ground floors have been empty since 1948 and are frequented only by rats. Many of the walls are damp and peeling, and there is no bath. A spokesman for agents D.E. and J. Levy recently told the local paper: 'Nobody from here has examined the house at all'.

The owners of an Indian restaurant in Hampstead Road also have a lease from D.E. and J. Levy for the ground floor and basement. As the rest of the



The riverfront at Old Windsor.

The meeting was also attended by a deputation from the Tolmers Village Association, which has produced a dossier of reasons why Camden should have nothing to do with Speculators.

Stock Conversion now owns five acres of land round the Square, including 67 houses. Of the total number of habitable rooms, 39% is empty. Tenants find it increasingly difficult to get repairs done, and have been told by visiting builders that there is a £5 limit. Two examples show what it's like to have Stock Conversion as a landlord.

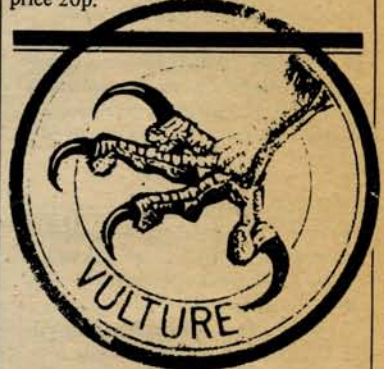
house was vacant, the restaurant staff decided to move upstairs, and spent a considerable amount of money doing it up. When Levy's found out, they asked them to leave immediately. The staff now have to commute to Finchley every night. The upstairs rooms remain empty.

Since Stock Conversion first started buying into the area in 1962, the Tolmers cinema has been pulled down, leaving a vacant site, and an occupied house owned by the company collapsed into the street with only a few minutes warning. No enquiry has ever been held

into the cause of the collapse.

Meanwhile the value of land around Tolmer's Square has risen from £50,000 per acre in 1965 to roughly £800,000 per acre in 1973. Stock Conversion's total assets stand at over £62 million.

The TVA is now demanding that Camden put a CPO immediately on all Stock Conversion land and restore the buildings to a habitable condition. 'Tolmers Destroyed' is available from the Tolmers Village Association, 102 Drummond Street, NW1 (387 4004) price 20p.



**It's the real thing?** For some weeks now London Broadcasting along with a couple of papers have been talking to a lady described as a 'bounty hunter' by a Commander at Scotland Yard with a view to doing a story on the lady's various exploits with London's police and criminal fraternities.

One of these involved a large number of counterfeit 1,00 Spanish peseta notes that the counterfeiters were willing to sell to a Spanish bank. The lady in question was acting as a go-between with the apparent co-operation of the Yard. The 'bounty hunter' kept a few sheets of the notes for future reference and, during a lengthy interview with a LBC reporter, agreed to let the reporter have a sheet of 12 notes to take back to the LBC offices.

Some time later when she inquired of LBC what was happening she was told by a rather embarrassed executive that the counterfeit notes had been 'lost, stolen or something'. Feeling unable to go to the police and explain that a sheet of counterfeit notes had been stolen they instead paid the lady a 'small token' for her inconvenience.

**I say, I say, I say:** After Kevin Gately's untimely death in Red Lion Square, the police are busily gathering information to be presented at next month's resumed inquest. One of the men involved in these enquiries is Detective Sergeant Savage, a member of the Yard's Special Incidents Squad, based at Holborn.

**Red Books:** Karl Marx may be in the best sellers, but Communism in the classroom is apparently not on.

Birmingham education department officials were upset to discover that a 'controversial' section on Communism had crept into their new schools syllabus. The most obvious thing was to consult a barrister. The barrister intimated that the syllabus appeared to contravene the 1944 Education Act. The council is now seeking further advice from the Department of Education and Science. Karl Marx was not amused.