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Even in miniature, Tolmers starts a row

AN ACCUSATION from members of the Stop the Levy Deal Campaign that Camden Town Hall's model of the Tolmers Square development was "grossly misleading" was quickly rebuffed by the council this week.

Campaign members called for withdrawal of the model from public display, claiming that the model office block was equivalent to 150,000 square feet, while 370,000 square feet of office space—"almost twice the bulk of Centre Point"—was actually proposed for the development.

But Councillor Frank Dobson, leader

of the council, said the model had been checked by Renton, Howard, Woods, architects for the scheme brief, and by members of Camden's Planning Department, and found to be accurate.

"There is no reason to assume that a tower block, as the protesters envisaged, is required," he said. The plot ratio of Centre Point was about 10:1, while that projected for Tolmers Square offices was 3.5:1.

He suggested that the protesters might have overlooked one part of the office development while measuring the model.

Mr Christopher Booker and Mr Bennie Gray, of Claudius Properties, which has submitted a controversial alternative scheme for Tolmers Square, hurriedly met with the

architects and Camden officers yesterday for another look at the model.

After the consultation, Mr Gray said: "We have looked at the model from a different point of view and the discrepancy is not as great as the campaign has earlier alleged."

A spokesman for the campaign said yesterday that "several thousand" people had signed a petition calling on the council next week to withdraw from the deal with Mr Joe Levy's Stock Conversion and Investment Trust for redevelopment of the area. Members would be taking petition forms round Camden shopping centres this weekend.

They also hoped to take a deputation

to the council meeting next Wednesday.

Members of the Tolmers Village Association, which claims to represent some 1,400 people living and working in the area, explained this week why they supported the campaign.

"In order to make a marginal gain in housing numbers, some members of the council are prepared to upset an old-established community of residents, small businesses and low rental shops," said Mrs Jane French, association secretary.

She pointed out that the Claudius non-profit redevelopment scheme for the area was not the only alternative to the Stock Conversion deal, and all alternatives should be explored.