

## Bid to beat developers welcomed

Standard Reporter

CAMDEN Council is to continue discussions with two journalists who have formed a property company to undercut property developer Joe Levy on a £30 million development - near Euston station.

Bennie Gray, and Christopher Booker, the former editor of Private Eye, maintain they can redevelop the Tolmers Square area with a mixture of profitable offices and council flats for less

profit and more community benefit.

Last night Camden Planning Committee discussed the scheme which would involve a deal between developers and the Council.

"We expected the planners and councillors to be rather sceptical," said Mr Booker, "but in fact we got a very sympathetic hearing. They asked us to give some assurances which we are sure we can fulfil."

Mr Joe Levy's Stock Conversion and Investment Trust has assembled a large site at Tolmers Square. If the council chose

another developer they would have to buy out Mr Levy.

The council hold the whip hand in that they decide who should get planning permission.

They could also threaten compulsory purchase of Mr Levy's land - but this would raise major questions of principle with the Department of the Environment.

"At the moment everything is still wide open," a council spokesman said today. "There are to be further consultations and we are going to consult the Secretary of State, Mr Peter Walker. We will look into the proposals very carefully."

*Even. Stand 26/6/73*