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Ham & High

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NATHAN
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BUYING OR SELLING
PROPERTY—THE
PEOPLE WHO CARE

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OFFICES PLAN REVIVES THE TOLMERS ROW

THE long-running Tolmers Square development row broke surface again this week when Camden Council formally applied to itself for outline planning consent for the latest scheme.

The application is for a mammoth 300,000 sq ft office block and about 55,000 sq ft of housing for around 1,300 people, plus shops, parking spaces and some open space and leisure areas.

This scheme proposes an office block 50,000 sq ft bigger, and housing for about 400 less people, than the 1973 joint scheme of Camden and property developer Joe Levy for the site, on the corner of Euston Road and Hampstead Road.

But the council finally threw the 1973 scheme out, following heavy public pressure, on the grounds that the office content was too large and there was too much profit in it for Mr Levy.

This week's application brought powerful response from Councillor Alan Greengross, leader of the Tory opposition on Camden Council, and GLC member for Hampstead.

"I'm sickened by the socialist cant and hypocrisy that called off, amidst a positive orgy of parading of consciences, the original deal that a previous Conservative council had set up," he declared.

"This would have provided homes for

nearly 2,000 people at tremendously subsidised cost. One of the pretended excuses was that 250,000 square feet of accompanying offices was excessive and that 100,000 feet was the appropriate maximum the socialists would allow.

"Having bought the land for £4 million and not knowing what to do with it the same socialists now have the temerity to plan to build no less than 300,000 feet of offices and actually provide less housing.

"Tolmers Square is the ultimate memorial to the duplicity and vindictiveness that calls itself Camden Labour Party."

Council leader Councillor Roy Shaw said the application was put in purely to comply with requirements relating to the office development permit which the council had for the office block.

"It does not mean that the details of the scheme have been finalised," he said. "There is still scope for variation. We are having discussions with developers and other interested bodies, and hope to come up with a final proposal which is acceptable to the council by the end of this year."

The increase in office space now proposed was to "make the development pay," he said. "But it is by no means certain that there will be that amount of offices in the scheme—it is still very much an open question," he added.

Deputy council leader Councillor John Mills said: "The whole saga of Tolmers Square is an appalling and disastrous example of non-planning over a number of years."

"But we have to deal now with the situation that exists."