

**Angela Inglis**  
**Industrial Photographer**  
[www.angelainglis.org](http://www.angelainglis.org)  
**27 Goldington Street**  
**London NW1 !UE**

**On behalf of**  
**The Goldington Street Tenants and Residents' Association NW!**  
**Coopers Lane Tenants and Residents Association NW1**  
**Churchway Estate NW1**  
**Residents from Chalton St NW1 Medburn St NW1 Penryn St. NW1 and**  
**Goldington St NW1**

28<sup>th</sup> March 2006

Mr. Ken Bean  
 NW Plans and Casework  
 Government Office for London  
 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Riverwalk House  
 157 – 161 Millbank  
 London SW1P 4RR

Dear Mr. Bean,

**King's Cross Central Planning Applications: 2004/2307/P and 2004/2311/P**  
**2004/2313/L-2316L; 2004/2317/C-2318;2004/2320C-21C submitted to Camden**  
**Borough Council by Argent Kings Cross**

I am writing on behalf of the local residents of Somers town covering three estates and three different streets in NW1. We wish to associate ourselves with other organisations such as the KX Railway Lands Group, Camden Green Party and King's Cross Conservation Area Advisory Committee in asking the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to call in the several KX Central Railway Lands planning applications for determination by Public Inquiry.

You will have already seen the coverage in the local Camden and Islington press demonstrating the huge disquiet there is locally over all the various policy and procedural issues. There are several areas of concern which have prompted us to make this demand for our collective benefit, the two most important being housing and conservation.

### **Housing**

There is an enormous demand in this area for family sized accommodation. The Planning Application is top heavy with single person and childless couple units. This

not only flies in the face of actual and measurable housing need (as per Camden and Islington Council's own statistics) it makes the area a non-sustainable community largely made up of young people who will have to move out of the area when they have children.

While we accept that single people and childless couples need to be housed we want the balance tilted more towards family accommodation. This could be done by increasing the number of housing units overall and doubling the social housing provision by removing (for example) the prospect of a casino from the plans. King's Cross now houses the British Library and attracts a large number of international academics to the area. The Developer, Camden Council and Islington Council should be concerned to set up the type of small businesses appropriate to this clientele: bookshops, antiques, curiosities, art galleries, publishers, print-makers (all businesses which could give local employment and training) rather than the gruesome vulgarity of Las Vegas. It may also house the University of the Arts: their graduates should be encouraged to work on site to create 'creative industries' jobs, perhaps in live work units in a retained Culross and Stanley (bearing in mind that some of these too should be family sized), This kind of thinking would energise the local community and schools with artistic input; and would be a proud Gateway to London.

### **Conservation**

We agree with the King's Cross Conservation Area Advisory Committee and wish to have the terms of the inquiry set to include the Conservation and Listed Building issues which Argent has dismissed out of hand, seemingly backed by Camden Council. We also support KXCAAC in their opposition to 'allowing demolitions of listed and unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area to make way for roads merely by an outline planning application' at the beginning of a 15 year development.

We quote from the KX Railway Lands Group who have put the above rather succinctly in their letter to you recently dated March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006. *'There are major architectural, urban design and historic building controversies surrounding the scheme, exacerbated by the attempt to deal with Listed Buildings through outline applications which 'wash over' them. Issues of height and bulk, integration with surroundings and treatment of historic buildings and spaces are highly controversial.'*

Great play has been made by Argent that English Heritage has not objected to the planning application. However, English Heritage has a wide brief and perhaps too many pressures. With so much intelligent and reasoned opposition from specialist independently funded conservation groups, Save Britain's Heritage, Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society, Industrial Buildings Preservation Trust and including the statutory Conservation Area Advisory Committee, English Heritage must reconsider its approval.

We are worried about the historic character of the canal, the granary basin and the re-erected gasholders being lost by insensitive redevelopment. We support KXCAAC's *'Alternative approach to Culross and Stanley North'*. We should like English Heritage and the developer to investigate the gateway approach further as it is a standard architectural treatment with structural reinforcement for old Victorian

bridges and buildings. We also support the ideas of the Industrial Buildings Preservation Trust as outlined by Judith Martin in her deputation to Camden Council. (Copy enclosed)

### **Other Points**

As local residents we should like to support what The Railway Lands group wrote in their letter to you on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006 *'The development is in conflict with national policy for sustainable communities; rather than sustaining communities it will accelerate displacement of low and middle income residents (including ethnic minorities) and of small and medium enterprises. It makes no provisions for housing, sporting, cultural or other community facilities which would meet local needs and thus threatens to establish a new/luxury quarter alongside an established mixed community with virtually no sharing or contact'*.

### **The Importance of a Centre for Cultural Exchange**

Rob Inglis pointed out in his deputation to Camden Council on 8<sup>th</sup> March the importance of a Cultural Exchange at King's Cross. He states; 'We oppose the application because it does not propose anything which will contribute to the cultural life of the area. It allots only one million pounds for total community uses. This is one half per cent of the total site expenditure of two billion'.

King's Cross is a multi ethnic, multi cultural place with a rich diversity in the languages spoken. The deputations from the ethnic minorities on March 8<sup>th</sup> were impressive stating that they opposed the application because it did not meet the needs of their communities. See Supplementary Agenda March 8<sup>th</sup> 4/53to54, 4/55to56, 4/57to58, 4/59to61, 4/62, 4/63to65 (Enclosed)

King's Cross is home to people from all walks of life and all religions. But it is without a modern community centre (s) where people of all ages and cultures can meet and talk to each other. King's Cross witnessed the catastrophe of 7/7 and has a deep need for places of cultural interchange where we can learn tolerance, respect and appreciation.

### **Open Spaces**

Finally and amazingly, the park in Cubitt Square, (as planned by Argent) will be a wind tunnel and therefore unattractive and unsuitable for the designated use, and would soon become a desolate and blighted space. What is needed is an independent environmental assessment, which looks at the design and suitability of all the open space provision. Sensibly this should include the issues raised by our deputation about the enlarging of the park around the Gasholders and protecting Camley Street Natural Park from the detrimental impacts of loss of light and the new pedestrian/cycle bridge, as well as Cubitt Park providing the main access route to the huge multi-storey car park. In itself a peculiar use of space. With such excellent public transport links, new tenants and even own occupier leaseholders could largely be offered "no-car" agreements (exceptions to be made for disability) which would free up car parking space for housing, and small businesses. No satisfactory

explanation has been given to date of why so much space is being allocated to car parking and one needs to be given.

### **Finally**

There may have been the full amount of statutory “consultation” but there has been no actual listening. Even more seriously there has been misreporting; e.g. neither my early response to the initial planning application in 2004 (posted on my website: [www.angelainglis.org](http://www.angelainglis.org) and enclosed), nor this residents’ group joint response to the amendments, which was both sent by post and posted on in November 2005 (enclosed) received any comment. Moreover our response was not mentioned in the 900 page Agenda Report put before the General Purposes, Development Control Sub-Committee for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2006, while the views of Goldington Tenants and Residents Association were reported incorrectly to the point of being incomprehensible. Many other responses known to us were treated in the 900 page committee report in a similar cavalier fashion; and were either omitted completely or again reported incorrectly to the point of being incomprehensible. We would emphasise that this is a serious procedural irregularity.

For all the reasons given above we, for our collective benefit, ask the Secretary of State to call the applications in to be determined by Public Inquiry. Should he decide against a ‘call in’, we hope that he will issue an article 14 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development) Order 1995 Procedure Notice to allow Government Office for London and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister time to clarify the many loose ends left by the planning committee, not all of which will be covered by the section 106 negotiations or the reserved matters applications.

Yours sincerely,

**Angela Inglis**

**On behalf of**

**The Goldington Street Tenants and Residents Association NW1**

**Coopers Lane Tenants and Resident Association NW1**

**Churchway Estate NW1**

**Residents from Chalton Street NW1, Medburn St. NW1, Penryn St., NW1 and Goldington St. NW1.**