



Residents celebrate as the council turn down a planning application.

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People power pays off

Campaigners in Twickenham who are determined to preserve three Victorian buildings are celebrating after planning officials rejected proposals to develop the site.

But despite last week's announcement that the application for the old electricity works in Hamilton Road will not go ahead, the campaign's figurehead has warned residents to stay vigilant.

Last month planners at Richmond upon Thames Council refused the application to redevelop the site, which would have demolished two of the Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM) and erected 29 flats, six work/live units and 34 car parking spaces in their place – to the joy of campaigners.

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Cathy Cooper, a Hamilton Road resident, welcomed the news.

She said: "I think they saw many things wrong with the application. Just about every single point has something wrong with it."

A meeting held by residents in January, attended by about 80 people, saw the campaigners preparing to fight their case in front of the borough's planning committee.

Miss Cooper said: "We hope people don't think it is over. We have to keep it up. We think the fact the building was put in a conservation area helps."

But Miss Cooper added: "We don't want it to just sit there with the buildings left neglected when they could be converted."

"It would do justice to Twickenham to have it converted."

The campaign gained the support of the ward councillors and Twickenham's MP Dr Vincent Cable.

Planning officers refused the application, stating the applicant had failed to justify the destruction of a BTM; the loss of 100 square metres of storage or workshop space was unacceptable; an adequate number of affordable units was not provided; there was a lack of planning obligation provision including education and no flood risk assessment was undertaken.