

Talking to: The Canterbury Residents Association

'That location is just not the right place for development'

Tom Warner
News Editor

On 2nd February our News Editor, Tom Warner (IQ) sat down with Terry Westgate (TW) and Richard Norman (RN), members of the Canterbury Resident's Association, to discuss their reasons for opposing the University's proposed new building complex on the Chaucer Fields.

IQ: How's the campaign coming along?

TW: We've been organising petitions, we've got a couple of petitions running, one for the residents association members, the other one is a community petition, we're doing quite well on them.

RN: It's very much a coalition... Various individuals have taken initiatives ... are the Whitstable Road residents association involved now?

TW: Yeah I think they are, they



there it's a space that they use.

TW: And they've been using it for, well forever basically.

RN: It's a local amenity and a university amenity because one of the things that makes the university so attractive is the green corridor around it as it were, that means its set in parkland not just continuous buildings. For a lot of students that's the walk up to the

the result of your campaign?

TW: A hard-fought battle. The opposition is very widespread. No matter who you speak to, when you explain the situation they are against it. I think the university seem to be taking over the city. They're spreading into the community now by getting rid of the green 'buffer-zone' between the university and the residential

only have four speakers in opposition to the planning application. There's also the chance to put in written objections by anyone who wants to object.

RN: And there will be a lot.

IQ: If you're working at the planning office then you're really going to take notice if this thing comes through your door with

that we're concerned about. We're happy to have students as neighbours, but if the balance is wrong then it's in nobody's interest. So our objection is very specifically to the location. We're not going to be made any happier by modifications to the designs. That location is just not the right place for development and one possibility is that the university might say "well we're going to make some of the buildings slightly smaller because we've responded to concerns about the dominant character of the development so we're going to make them three storeys instead of four", or something like that. Then they will say "so you see, we've listened and done our best to alleviate concerns".

TW: So we're already aware that that is what's going to happen. They're going to say, "we've compromised and listened to the residents."

IQ: Have you ever got to the stage living here, where you've thought: I need to move, I need to go somewhere quieter?

TW: Well, a lot of residents have.