

Hall's future will be discussed at meeting

By Tom Ambrose

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THE sale of Kneller Hall will be debated at a public meeting with the Ministry of Defence later this month.

Twickenham MP Tania Mathias secured the meeting during a Parliamentary debate with defence minister Mark Lancaster in Westminster Hall on February 23.

The debate will be held at Kneller Hall, the home of the Royal Military School of Music, on Friday, March 18 at 7.30pm.

Dr Mathias will be joined by the Commandant Barry Jenkins and representatives from the Ministry of Defence.

She said: "It's going to be very tricky. I still feel that because we are one of 12 (sites up for consideration) that if we show how important and unique this is then hopefully the ministry will think again."

"It's hard because they have said it doesn't need to be site specific."

The Ministry of Defence has already contacted Richmond Coun-



MP Tania Mathias is fighting to preserve Kneller Hall from development

cil's planning department about building 192 homes on the site.

Defence minister, Mr Lancaster also confirmed it would cost at least £30 million to upgrade the Royal

Military School of Music's "ancient and inefficient" home.

The hall was discussed at Tuesday's full council meeting at York House.

Both sides of the chamber pledging to oppose its sale.

Council leader Lord True said: "The council – regardless of political affiliation – stands united in its opposition to turning this treasure into a housing estate."

"Make no mistake – we will let any developer who is tempted to buy Kneller Hall know that we will not make it easy for them."

"We will resist bitterly any attempt to encroach on any green space."

Leader of Richmond's Liberal Democrats, Councillor Gareth Roberts, is also committed to fighting the sale of the hall.

He said: "Where the defence minister and his army of bean counters see an asset to be disposed of, we see a unique institution."

"It is an intrinsic part of Whitton's identity and heritage."

"One which has a proud history of service both to the local community and to the nation as a whole."

"To suggest that this could be cast aside in favour of saving a few bob is both short sighted and insulting."

A successful conference



High profile speakers

MORE than 100 businesses took part in Richmond's annual Entrepreneurs Conference at Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) last Thursday.

Sir Vince Cable was the headline speaker, and Richmond's cabinet member for business, Pamela Fleming, addressed the entrepreneurs regarding regional government and small business strategy.

Richmond Chamber of Commerce chief executive Anne Newton said: "We had some overwhelming support from local businesses making the Richmond Entrepreneurs Conference a cornerstone event for us here in Richmond, sitting well alongside our Richmond Business Awards."

HIGH ROAD AUCTIONS

Twickenham, TW1

Selected Antiques Sale
Monday 7th March at 6pm

Viewing: Friday 4th March to Monday 7th March 10am-6pm
Full catalogue available online from Friday 4th March



Lot 135: An Omega Speedmaster wristwatch
£600-800



Lot 125: A pair of silver mounted claret jugs
£400-600



Lot 286: A George III blunderbuss
£300-500



Lot 123: Portrait of a gentleman
£600-800



175: A George III tea caddy
£300-500



Lot 65: An Edwardian suffragette necklace
£200-300

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