

Law scuppers homes plan at historic house

PLANS to demolish an Edwardian house and build 24 homes have been scuppered after new legislation came in demanding half the development be "affordable housing".

Telford Homes believes knocking down Chepstow, Leicester Road, Wanstead – part of the historic Counties Estate – and replacing it with 18 flats and six semi-detached houses, is no longer economically viable in

light of the new law.

The developer is blaming town hall staff for delaying the planning application process – which has dragged on for eight months – and has appealed to government inspectors at the Planning Inspectorate to step in.

But a Redbridge Council spokesman defended the authority.

She said: "For every planning application for a new housing development, the council must comply with government regulations by providing an extensive consultation period with local residents.

"After the end of the consultation

period, the council received a number of complaints on different aspects of the proposed development, all of which had to be thoroughly investigated by the planning team."

The spokesman said the government imposed the new rule – which means all applications to build 14 homes or more must include 50 per cent affordable housing – and not the council.

Helen Zammett, chairman of the Counties Residents' Association, which collected 400 names on a petition against the development, welcomed the news, saying there

were 16 preservation orders protecting mature trees in Chepstow's grounds – making the proposed development unworkable.

She said if the house could not be saved from the wrecking ball, the group would like to see a smaller number of houses more in keeping with the estate's early 20th century villas, built in its place.

Mrs Zammett said: "Large blocks of flats do not belong in this setting and we suggest more appropriate designed houses could still yield a profit."



● FIGHTING ON: Counties Residents' Association members outside