

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
AND ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981**

Revised Inquiry into

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK
(AYLESBURY ESTATE SITES 1B-1C)**

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2014

PINS REFERENCE: NPCU/CPO/A5840/74092

Objection by Maurizio Piga

**Of Padbury, Bagshot Street,
London SE17 2QT**

23 October 2017

Introduction

1. My name is Maurizio Piga and I am writing to object to the above compulsory purchase order.
2. Whilst I am not resident on the order land, I am resident in the next phase 2 and am conscious that confirmation of this order will be relied upon by the Council both in its approach to negotiations and for compulsory purchase orders for later phases.
3. I have lived on the estate for 20 years and have a leasehold interest in Padbury, Bagshot Street, London SE17 2QT a 3 bed flat with balcony which I have occupied for 11 years.
4. I am very happy with my home and where I live. It is very spacious and I enjoy sitting out on the balcony. There is plenty of green space, play areas and local amenities with Burgess Park just a few minutes walk away.
5. A forced move at this stage could be particularly traumatic and detrimental to me. I am a tourist guide and I have to be very close to both the City of Westminster and the City of London. The council is offering half of what I would need to buy the equivalent property in the same area
6. Notwithstanding the package of rehousing measures and assurances referred to in the Council's Statement of Case, I have not been offered or seen any alternative accommodation which would be suitable and offer the same advantages as my present home. Indeed it is unlikely that I will be able to find similarly spacious apartments or apartments with similar gardens or such large balconies as I currently own. It is very unlikely that I will be placed in an equivalent position.
7. I thoroughly enjoy the vibrant communities of Walworth Road, Old Kent Road and Borough Road. I feel very sad that I will have to give up my home for an inferior price just in order to please a non local housing association investment.

8. When I decided to buy my home it was because I wanted to benefit from the main advantage of home ownership – the freedom to do as I please with my home. None of the rehousing options currently on offer will place me in an equivalent position.

9. Indeed, the one rehousing offer that would have placed me in an equivalent position has been withdrawn by the Council – the ‘like for like’ property swap option.

10. We question whether it is necessary to demolish our homes. We understand that they are structurally sound and comply with building regulations. The Council’s evidence to the inquiry is based largely on a subjective argument that the public realm is poorly designed. As long term end users of the estate we disagree – the green spaces are well used and the walkways are a useful way of getting around and crucially keep children safe away from busy roads.

11. The properties in our block are easily accessed via stairs or an external walkway ramp. The walkway ramps have a very mild gradient to enable wheelchair access; they are regularly used by residents, particularly, the disabled and elderly, one of whom is 95 years old. They are seen as a positive design features and are part of the estate’s built-in accessibility design features.

12. The blocks could benefit from a “face lift”, as has happened elsewhere, but there is no reason to destroy buildings which are only 40 years old. The Council’s argument that the estate is a ‘monolithic’, ‘brutalist’, ‘concrete fortress’ and that the fabric of the estate is ‘dated’ is itself based on dated logic. There is a growing appreciation for modernist architecture and the healthy sales market for homes on the estate despite being earmarked for demolition attests to this.

13. Destroying communities and demolishing perfectly good homes because they are concrete or dated is not environmentally or socially sustainable. I submit that the Council should give further consideration to the option of refurbishment.

14. The emphasis on the part of the Council so far in negotiations has been to press the relocation opportunities, which so far have turned out to be unaffordable or contain restrictions in the small print. Liaison between different Council departments has been

poor; there is a complete lack of continuity, whereby different officers from different departments continually ask the same questions.

15. There is little discussion about the level of compensation. The Council refused to negotiate and said that if we don't agree with its valuation then we can take it to court (Upper Tribunal). For people like me on modest incomes, the prospect of litigation and associated risk is simply unthinkable.

16. The Council's use of compulsory purchase powers without having a package in place to ensure that leaseholders are placed in equivalent position is oppressive and a breach of human rights. I urge the Secretary of State to reject the Council's application for compulsory purchase powers.

Signed:

Maurizio Piga

Date:

23/10/2017