

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

**Proof of Evidence of
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BA (Hons), PhD
For the Aylesbury Leaseholders Group**

January 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 Since September 2013 I have been Professor of Human Geography at the University of Leicester. I was previously Professor of Human Geography at King's College London. I am a social scientist and have a PhD in Human Geography (awarded 1995) from the University of Edinburgh. I am an international expert, with over 20 years of research experience, on urban regeneration, urban policy, and urban communities.

1.2 I am currently working on an Economic and Social Research Council funded project 'Gentrification, Displacement, and the Impacts of Council Estate Renewal in C21st London' (2017-2020, *ES/N015053\1*, £615,341), some of this research is embedded in this witness statement.

1.3 I have previously given evidence to two public inquiries (the Heygate Public Inquiry and the first Aylesbury Public Inquiry).

1.4 My evidence is summarized here and contained in full in a main proof and a separate volume of appendices LL1-LL4:

LL1 - Maps showing displacement and FOI request 837399

LL2 - Sample of ESRC project interviews with displaced leaseholders and leaseholders in the process of being displaced

LL3 - Sample of ESRC project interviews with displaced council tenants and council tenants under threat of displacement

LL4 - 2015 Benchmark report for future monitoring of the regeneration programme, Nov 2017

LL5 - Press article 'Metro' (9/10/2017)

LL6 - Press article 'Southwark News' (4/5/2017)

1.5 My evidence speaks to the following two items of the inspector's pre-inquiry meeting (PIM) list of 'Tests to be applied to the Compulsory Purchase Order':

- Whether the purpose for which the land is being acquired fits in with the adopted Local Plan for the area.
- Whether the extent to which the proposed purpose will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area.

2. Whether the purpose for which the land is being acquired fits in with the adopted Local Plan for the area

2.1 I gave evidence at the previous Aylesbury inquiry arguing that the existing community was being split up and displaced. My evidence was rejected largely on the grounds that 50% of residents were supposedly being re-accommodated within the estate (Paragraph 349 of Inspector Coffey's 29 January 2016 report)

2.2 At that time, I had evidence of displacement numbers and postcodes from Notting Hill Trust, but no access to information showing exactly how many residents were being re-accommodated within the estate. I have obtained this data via FOI (837399) (LL1), it shows that only about 10% of tenanted residents decanted have been rehoused back within the estate.

2.3 The Council has to date decanted 1,310 households from the active phases of the Aylesbury Estate regeneration (Phase 1a: 53 households decanted. Site 7: 59 households decanted. Phase 1b/1c: 566 households decanted. Phase 2: 632 households decanted).

2.4 Only 112 **former secure tenanted households** have been rehoused back on the redeveloped footprint of the Aylesbury Estate, about 10% (LL1). They currently live in the new L&Q developments on Phase 1a and Site 7. This means about 1,000 tenanted households have been rehoused in existing council homes elsewhere in the borough with massive knock on effects:

2.5 One of these knock on effects is the increasing number of households in need of emergency accommodation in the borough being rehoused elsewhere. A

total of 1,143 tenanted households on Southwark's housing list were relocated out of borough over the past 5 years due to a lack of council homes (LL5).

2.6 According to FOI (837399) (LL1), by 10th October 2017 Southwark Council had acquired 285 **leasehold and freehold** properties on the Aylesbury Estate, of which 148 were recorded as being physically resident on the estate. The displacement of those 148 has been mapped (see Appendix 1). Only 16 of these have managed to remain in SE17 on or near the footprint of the estate. That is about 11%. Only 6 have been rehoused on the redeveloped phases 1a and site 7.

2.7 The purpose for which the land is being acquired therefore fails to fit in with the adopted Local Plan for the area which requires 50% of tenants to be rehoused within the estate.

2.8 Being rehoused locally, eg. in Southwark, is not the same as being rehoused on or near the footprint of the estate.

2.9 There are psychological impacts to being decanted from one's long term home and community. My interviews in LL2 and LL3 demonstrate this well, eg. stress, anxiety, depression, suicide attempts, etc. The burdens of caring for ill or disabled relatives is evident, as are the escalation of health issues during decantment (see interview in LL3).

3. Whether the extent to which the proposed purpose will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area.

3.1 The scheme's failure to meet the requirement for 50% of tenants to be rehoused within the estate is having the knock-on effect:

3.2 The following article stemming from an FOI request shows that 1143 homeless families have been moved out of the borough in the last five years. This is around the same number of tenanted households decanted from the

Aylesbury estate to date (LL5): <http://metro.co.uk/2017/10/09/number-of-homeless-families-being-moved-from-local-area-doubles-in-five-years-6985737/>

3.3 Evidence of the negative social impacts of this displacement can be found in appendices 2 and 3. These negative impacts are economic, social, cultural and public health impacts.

3.4 The research¹ findings in the 2017 *Living on the Aylesbury Estate* (LL4) echo my ESRC research findings.

3.5 NHT's focus on social sustainability is to be welcomed, but critically - displacing the Aylesbury community will not achieve this.

3.6 And NHT's response to the findings *Listening to the Aylesbury* (http://aylesburynow.london/web/uploads/files/content_54_0.pdf) does not, however, guarantee right of return to the footprint of the estate or like for like for either leaseholders or council tenants.

3.7 Data from http://www.2.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/200141/housing_strategy shows that between 2012-2014 the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in Southwark increased from 668 to 898 households (chart 27). The number of statutorily homeless households in temporary accommodation increased from 606 in 2012 to 782 in 2014 (chart 13); African and Caribbean populations disproportionately affected (see chart 7).

3.8 The extra cost to the Acquiring Authority associated with B&B accommodation has led to a five-fold increase in its spend on temporary housing over the last five years (LL6): <https://www.southwarknews.co.uk/news/council-spend-temporary-housing-now-five-times-20112012/>

3.9 There is a causal link between the scheme's failure to meet the AAAP requirement of rehousing 50% of tenants within the estate and these negative social and economic impacts.

¹ The fact that members of the pro-regeneration Creation Trust's Community Team carried out some of these interviews, alongside Social Life staff (paid for by the regenerator NHT) introduces bias into the research process, however, despite this the findings echo my own.

3.91 The scheme as implemented is therefore failing to promote or improve the economic and quality of life well-being of the area. The effect of the regeneration scheme is to displace the existing low income community, with particular impacts on the BME population.

3.92 The Council claims that it is building 11,000 new Council homes, but as the data I have collected shows this is failing to keep up with the rate at which it is demolishing council homes: <http://35percent.org/2017-10-02-council-leader-peter-john-alternative-facts/>

4. The scheme fails to comply with the Area Action Plan's tenure distribution requirements

4.1 Policy BH3 (Tenure Mix) of the Aylesbury Area Action Plan says:

'To help ensure that the new neighbourhood contributes to community cohesion, all new homes should be tenure blind i.e. it should not be possible to distinguish between affordable and private homes from their external appearance'
(Paragraph 3.3.7).

4.2 The AAAP goes on to require that:

"All developments blocks should seek to provide the tenure mix which is appropriate for the proposals site in which the block is located, as set out in policy BH3, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not possible through an open-book financial appraisal." (Paragraph 3.3.8)

4.3 This accords with Policy P13, Paragraph 1.4 of the New Southwark Plan which requires development to be *'tenure blind'* and the London Plan (Housing SPG) which requires that *'schemes should be designed to maximise tenure integration'* (Paragraph 1.3.18).

4.4 I understand from the revised planning application supporting documents (Design Addendum – S73 amendments) that the development blocks in the

proposed FDS application do not comply with these AAP requirements. They are not 'tenure blind' and that the tenures have been segregated such that two tallest blocks overlooking Burgess park (blocks 4A and 5A) are entirely private tenure, while the 'affordable' units are located in the low-rise blocks in their shadow and away from the park. Further, the previous consented planning application proposed a third tall block (block 6A) overlooking the park, which was to be social rented tenure. However, the proposed amendments to the planning application will see this tenure swapped for entirely private and shared ownership flats. There will now be no social rented units in any of the three tower blocks overlooking the park. The following tenure diagram (extract) from the S73 Design Addendum (17/AP/3885) illustrates this:



Massing Model _ Amended

Phase 1a

4.5 The same failure to comply with the AAP's tenure distribution has occurred in the adjacent completed phase 1a scheme.

4.6 This is block D3 of the redeveloped phase 1a of the scheme comprising a total of 29 flats, in the tallest block of phase 1a overlooking Burgess Park. The accommodation schedule in (RN20) shows that these have all been delivered as private (for sale) homes; there is not one single affordable unit of any kind in block D3.



4.7 An independent benchmarking review commissioned by NHHT and carried out by research group www.social-life.co in 2015 (LL4) found that residents had experienced an *'increased polarisation around class'* and that *"in the new L&Q homes, different tenures are generally grouped together within blocks...different*

to the rest of the estate, where leaseholder flats are distributed randomly.... L&Q residents reported less mixing across tenures."

END
