

**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**

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**Objection by**

**FELIX BADU  
PRUDENCE AMUZU**

**of\_**

**NORTHCHURCH DAWES STREET, LONDON SE17 2AQ**

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**31<sup>st</sup> October 2017**

## **CPO OBJECTION.**

1. My name is Felix Badu and I am writing to object to the above compulsory purchase order.
2. Whilst I am not resident on the order land, I am a leaseholder on a later phase of the development 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 with my family for 23 years and have had a leasehold interest in Northchurch SE17 2AQ, a 3-bed flat with balcony overlooking the proposed Plot 18 development for the last 17 years.
4. The recent change in status of my property was a severe shock. Since the declaration of the first CPO in the regeneration scheme recently. My family and I have lived in a state of uncertainty. An atmosphere of confusion and fear is actively encouraged by the council who do very little to inform those directly affected by their plans. This culminated in our discovery, a week before a significant council meeting, that our home was no longer in Phase 3 but now part of Plot 18 and would be subject to a different CPO. This is highly stressful information to receive news of, especially with so little time to organize a response. The inability to clearly communicate vital information convinces my family that the council fully intend to use any trick in the book to force out objectors in our position.
5. We are very happy with our home and the quality of life it has provided. My children and I have many happy memories of their time growing up in and around the home. There is plenty of green space, play areas for young families and local amenities with Burgess Park just a few minutes walk away. The quick access to central London has been highly useful for my children's studies and later employment.

6. When we moved to the area in 1994, it was a blessing for us to find a community of African, Caribbean and other ethnic minorities close to the heart of London. Over the years, the diverse community of the Aylesbury has provided us with; emotional support, intercultural exchange, friendships for my children and a religious peer group that has all contributed to helping us feel at home in the area. As expressed clearly in the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities & Local Governments decision last year, Southwark's regeneration scheme disproportionately impacts on this local community of black and ethnic minorities.

7. Notwithstanding the package of rehousing measures and assurances referred to in the Council's Statement of Case, we have not been offered or seen any alternative accommodation which would be suitable and offer the same advantages as our present home. Indeed it is unlikely that we will be able to find similarly spacious apartments with large balconies as we currently own. It is very unlikely that we will be placed in an equivalent position and we will be uprooted from the community that has given us such security.

8. Forcing us out of our home and my children's local community would be particularly traumatic. It will also impact on my children's future, forcing them into upheaval at vulnerable stages of their development. Forcing them to relocate at this vulnerable stage in their development will negatively affect their employment prospects and mental health.

9. When we decided to buy our home it was because we wanted to benefit from the main advantage of home ownership – the freedom to do as we please with our home and pass it on to our children. None of the rehousing options currently on offer will place us in an equivalent position.

10. Indeed, the one rehousing offer that would have placed us in an equivalent position has been withdrawn by the Council – the 'like for like' property swap option.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. The blocks could benefit from a “face lift”, as has happened elsewhere, but there is no reason to destroy buildings that 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.

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:

Felix Badu

Prudence Amuzu

29 October 2017