

Mary Powell – Opening Statement (Objection 11)

1. My name is Mary Powell. I have lived on the Love Lane Estate since 2007, and in Tottenham since 1995. I first came to this area by chance as it was convenient for my work when I first moved to London but I have over the years put down roots and Tottenham is my home. It is where I have lived longer than anywhere else and almost all my adult life. I have friends and volunteering links in the area and make use of the nearby green spaces. I purchased a property on the estate in 2007, as a matter of choice. The location and property layout have worked well for my needs, and I would not be moving away out of choice. I am not here to defend a primarily financial interest but to fight for my home. I have no desire or need to move now or in the foreseeable future.
2. The residents of the Love Lane Estate have been in limbo since 2012 when this scheme was first proposed, but now the process to remove us all has accelerated and I would argue it has been too fast in the last year. I had expected to be made to move in 2029 but that has been brought forward to 2025 in a process which I will argue is opaque. There will be no suitable properties in the new estate to move into at the time I am expected to move out and the same will be true for many tenants, not just leaseholders. I would have to leave the neighbourhood which has been my home since 2007, or contemplate two moves.
3. I will argue it is not clear what is on offer in the new estate, which I believe will still be unaffordable, unless I am prepared to be subject to a loan from the council, with strings. The specification and likely cost of maintaining such new properties is also unavailable.
4. In the meantime, the council has allowed, even encouraged, the Love Lane estate to become run down, I believe to encourage residents to give up and leave at the first opportunity. It is a symptom of poor management by a council which has recently received multiple negative judgements from the Regulator of Social Housing and the Ombudsman. Building a new estate with an element of social housing and affordable purchase is no guarantee that the housing stock will be any better maintained or managed by the council. The cause is not being addressed.
5. If an estate of 297 properties is demolished and replaced eventually with around 3000 properties, including buildings of 29 stories the whole character of the area will change, becoming a closely packed dense neighbourhood with high rise apartment blocks selling at expensive prices. We can see already at Tottenham Hale and developing at Meridian Water what such neighbourhoods will look and feel like, sterile, soulless wind tunnels. The proposed social rent and affordable purchase housing is located towards the back, away from the High Road, one block literally on the wrong side of the tracks, and in the shadow of the high-rise apartment blocks. Poor doors will be replaced by the back blocks.
6. I am fighting for my home and to live in an established, genuinely mixed and affordable human-scale community.
7. For the reasons I have given I request that the CPO is not confirmed in respect of the residential properties in the Love Lane Estate.