

Dear Camden Planning team,

**Re: 2023/2510/P One Museum Street**

I wish to **object** to the above proposal. Until recently I lived in a block of flats in Camden owned by Labtech. Many of the objections to the redevelopment of Selkirk House will focus on height, open space or other very relevant considerations, and these remain relevant because the the proposed application is virtually identical to the old one except for a reduction in height by 6m and some alterations to the listed buildings:

- There is not enough housing provided – only 9 low cost, 9 affordable, minimal daylight
- The building remains too high which will have a big impact on the local conservation area and skyline, and could create a precedent in our historic city.
- Climate change – there needs to be a strong justification for the demolition of the existing building and the impact that will have on the environment. I'm not convinced that this is it. Retrofitting has not been properly thought through.

You will receive many objections on these grounds and more, I'm sure. However, I wish to object on the grounds that Labtech are not a suitable or competent freeholder, and certainly not one that Camden should be doing further business with in respect of residential property.

I am unable to provide confidential detail in a public objection, but I am more than happy to do so on a confidential basis if further information is required. In summary however, we have found Labtech to be a thoroughly incompetent and uncaring freeholder whose actions (and inaction) have caused us significant harm and inconvenience. We feel it is important to register our objections as we are very concerned that future residents of Selkirk House, if approved, would suffer similarly. We are concerned that these practices might be amplified against vulnerable

people. Labtech's website speaks of people, community and CSR. Our experience could not be further from the truth.

In respect of our property, Labtech did not hold key information relating to the property on site, which they were required to do so by law. This had implications for leaseholders such as myself that needed to rely on this information or pass it to third parties as and when requested (e.g. blocking our ability to remortgage and more). We brought this to the attention of Labtech to suggest that they obtain it and it was clear that:

- They did not have sufficient resource to deal with this issue
- They did not have sufficient sectoral competence to understand the seriousness of the issue and the impact to leaseholders
- They were unwilling to consider expert professional advice that would have resolved the issue for all parties
- They were unwilling to communicate with leaseholders, who were the most impacted by their behaviour
- They were caught lying on multiple occasions, as confirmed in writing, by third parties
- They simply didn't care enough to escalate to employees with sufficient authority to manage the issue adequately.

I personally have lost thousands of pounds due directly to Labtech's incompetence, countless hours, and immeasurable opportunity loss – all of which was entirely avoidable had they opened themselves to proper, professional advice and listened to the (wellfounded, as it turned out) objections to their reckless behaviour from leaseholders. As a result we are pursuing action against Labtech for the harm caused.

In addition to all of the above, the general management of the building has been extremely sub-standard. This is another very important consideration. We complained formally and repeatedly about our managing agents, this has been ignored. 'End of year' budget reconciliations took on average four years to receive. We have been billed for costs incurred by other blocks and have to forensically check each document for regular, common mistakes. Broken fixtures remain unfixed and emails unresponded to for months. This has not been merely cosmetic - break ins have been numerous as safety mechanisms

and points of entry have been left unmaintained or out of action. Labtech's ownership of the property contributed to a decline in the quality and ultimate value of the block, to the detriment of all parties and the general feel of the area looking scruffier than in the past.

We are therefore extremely concerned that Labtech is potentially increasing its residential holdings in Camden, especially if some residents may be vulnerable. The power that they hold as freeholders is huge. The way we have been treated is appalling, has put leaseholder lives on hold and significantly damaged mental health and subjected them to immense stress and inconvenience. Moreover, Labtech's tenure has degraded the area in which their property sits while they focus their resources on commercial over residential property. These are very relevant considerations that warrant an **objection**.

It's clear that Labtech are a commercial property investor first and foremost and have no interest or experience in residential leaseholders, people or community. Their housing proposal is the bare minimum. If they want to do business in Camden, we feel they should treat the local community with dignity and respect, be held to account, and demonstrate a basic level of competence. This is simply not happening.

Accordingly I wish to **object** to the proposal.

Thanks and best wishes